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THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY
TOWARD THAILAND AND SOME IMPLICATIONS
FOR THE FUTURE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

By

Stanton C. Lewis

B.S., University of Montana, 1964

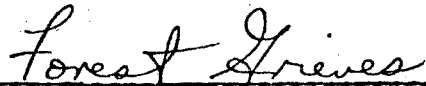
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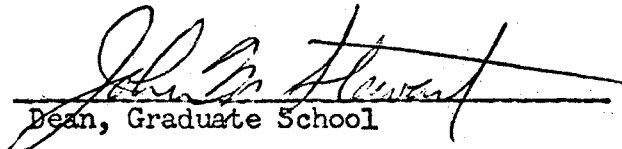
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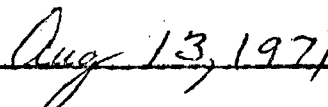
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1971

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PREFACE

This thesis will attempt to uncover the developing international structure in Southeast Asia for the next decade. For purposes of this writing, Southeast Asia will include Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and South Vietnam. Initially, a brief survey of U.S. relations with Thailand will serve as a point of orientation to the emergence of the Nixon Doctrine and disengagement. Following this, the latest examples of Southeast Asian regionalism will be examined and the new quadrilateral relationship of the great powers in the area will be viewed. The conclusions will present some speculations as to desirable actions that great powers and nations of the area might initiate to contribute to stability and insure that the simultaneous emergence of regionalism and the quadrilateral relationship become compatible.

My acknowledgements for assistance in writing are to the following people: to Dr. Forest L. Grieves, my thesis director, who helped me initiate the project and provided needed assistance at many impasses; to Dr. Louis D. Hayes, who provided insight and encouragement; to Dr. Frank B. Bessac, who contributed his extensive knowledge of the many nations of the subject area; to Anita Lewis and Joy Schroeber, who typed the manuscript so efficiently.

August, 1971
Missoula, Montana

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. DEVELOPMENT OF THAI-U.S. RELATIONS	1
The Early Treaties	1
Relations After World War II	5
Post-1968 Developments	9
The Nixon Doctrine	15
II. REGIONALISM	23
Feasibility of Regionalism	23
Earlier Attempts at Regional Cooperation	35
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations	38
Defense Cooperation	43
III. JAPAN, SOVIET UNION, AND THE EMERGENCE OF QUADRILATERAL BALANCE	47
Japan	47
Soviet Union	57
Quadrilateral Balance	62
IV. CONCLUSIONS	67
Toward Non-Alignment	67
Regionalism Needs Impetus	69
Support of Great Powers Needed	72
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	82

CHAPTER I

DEVELOPMENT OF THAI-U.S. RELATIONS

The Early Treaties

The first treaty ever negotiated between the United States and an Asian nation was made in 1833 by the Thai King, Phra Nong Khao (Rama III), and Edmund Roberts, a diplomatic envoy sent to Southeast Asia by President Andrew Jackson.¹ This first treaty was signed at Bangkok on March 20, 1833 and was primarily a treaty of amity and commerce. Its purposes were to establish a "perpetual peace" between the United States and the King of Siam, and to enable the citizens of both countries to hold commercial intercourse in the ports of their respective nations.

The Treaty of 1833 is significant not only because it was the first treaty concluded by the U.S. with an Asian nation, but also because it built friendship between the two countries as equals. There was no suggestion of an encroachment on Thailand's sovereignty and this greatly impressed the Thai leaders. Further, this treaty was concluded ten years before the treaty which established relations between the U.S. and China and twenty years before the one establishing relations between the U.S. and Japan.²

However, this somewhat tranquil relationship based on equality did not last long. Shortly thereafter, a system of extraterritoriality

¹U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes on Thailand, Pubn. No. 7961, June, 1967, p. 4.

²Royal Thai Embassy, Office of Public Relations Attache, Thailand and Her Relations with the U.S., February, 1970, p. 1.

was imposed on Japan by treaties concluded by Western nations for the protection of Western merchants. Subsequently, a similar system made its appearance in Thailand, and Britain led other Western powers to impose this system upon the Thais in the form of a series of new treaties concluded in the years of 1855 and 1856.

The second treaty between the United States and Thailand was signed at Bangkok on the 19th of May, 1856. It was known as the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation.³ Mr. Townsend Harris signed on behalf of the United States. According to the terms of this treaty, a large slice of Thai sovereignty was carved away. All American citizens coming to Thailand were exempted from jurisdiction of the Thai Courts of Law; and while Thailand could impose import duty on all articles of import from the U.S., such duty was not to exceed three percent of the market value of the goods.

There seems little doubt that by these treaties with the Western powers of the period, Thailand was deprived of some of her rights as a sovereign nation--the right to administer justice to all throughout her kingdom and the right to levy such import tariffs as would meet her increasing need for the development of her country. In her struggle to free herself from these treaty obligations, the Thai leaders made frequent and persistent efforts to have the old treaties revised; but these efforts were to no avail. During the latter 1800's American missionaries entered Thailand in small numbers and initiated reforms in education, medicine, and technology.

³Ibid.

Further, about 1900, King Chulalongkorn employed advisors from the Harvard Law School to assist the kingdom in abolishing extra-territoriality. Toward the end of World War I, during which Thailand had sent her troops to France to fight with allied soldiers, Thailand again appealed for the revision of the previous treaties. The allies convened a council at Versailles for this purpose, but only the U.S. supported revision. Subsequently, in 1920, the U.S. kept her word and concluded a new treaty without asking for any compensation. This treaty was signed in Washington, D.C. on the 16th of December, 1920.⁴ Under the terms of this treaty the agreement of 1856 was nullified in its entirety.

In addition, the U.S. relinquished all extraterritorial rights and all American citizens were made subject to the jurisdiction of the Thai Courts of Law. Regarding the limitations of the tariff, Thailand was given the right to impose any tariff on American goods providing the other treaty powers also agreed without compensation. Thus, the United States was the first country to have voluntarily surrendered the extra-territorial rights of its citizens and the limitations upon tariffs. The 1920 treaty was an important force that exerted influence upon other treaty powers and led them to give up their special rights.

By 1926, all the old treaties had been revised and the limitations upon Thai jurisdiction abolished. The Thai leaders were aided in this endeavor by the services of Francis B. Sayre, son-in-law of President Woodrow Wilson and later American Commissioner in the Philippines. Thus, the good will and friendship between the two countries was solidified.

⁴U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Background Notes on Thailand, Pubn. No. 7961, June, 1967, p. 4.

Throughout this era, good will was created, many friendships were formed and the Thai began looking to the U.S. for moral support in their struggles with the British and French. In addition, many Americans voiced their admiration for the small country in Southeast Asia which had remained independent of colonial rule.

A fourth treaty between the two countries was signed at Bangkok on the 13th of November, 1937. This treaty, which was based on the full measure of equity, reciprocity and mutual benefit, is still in force to-day.⁵ When World War II began in December of 1941, a lull was initiated in Thai-U.S. relations. The Japanese invaded Thailand and quickly overcame Thai resistance. From this time until the end of the war, Thailand was occupied by Japanese forces and was considered as such by the United States. Further, the Thai military leader, Phibun Songkhram, declared war against the U.S. and Great Britain in order to gain maximum autonomy for the Thai Government during the occupation period.

However, there was no actual deep-seated hostility toward the Western nations nor any real sympathy for Imperial Japan. Owing to this, the United States took a somewhat unconventional action and refused to recognize this declaration of war and supported a "Free Thai" movement that infiltrated the country for military and intelligence purposes.⁶ Thai nationals in both the United States and Great Britain organized this movement as well as underground resistance which co-operated closely with

⁵Royal Thai Embassy, Office of Public Relations Attache, Thailand and Her Relations with the U.S., February, 1970, p. 3.

⁶James G. Driscoll, "American Policy in Thailand," National Observer (August 25, 1969), p. 16.

the United States and other allies. However, at the end of World War II, Thai leaders had to make a formal agreement with Great Britain for the termination of the "State of War" between the two countries. In contrast, the United States made a forthright declaration that it did not regard itself at war with Thailand, and consequently, there was no need to conclude any treaty or agreement to terminate the State of War between the two countries. Further, no compensation or reparation was demanded from the Thais.

Relations after World War II

After World War II, Thailand turned to the United States for support and friendship and received a spontaneous response. An agreement concerning economic and technical co-operation was signed by the two countries on the 19th of September, 1950, and since then economic and technical assistance has flowed from the U.S. to the Kingdom. When Communist power was established on the mainland of China in 1949, a danger to Thailand in the form of threats of military aggression and clandestine subversion became apparent. Thus, on October 17, 1950, the United States and Thailand concluded the Military Assistance Agreement. According to this agreement, U.S. military aid has been rendered to help strengthen the Thai armed forces and Joint United States Military Assistance and Advisory Group was established to train Thai officers and soldiers.

With the close of World War II and the commencement of the Cold War in Southeast Asia, the United States replaced Great Britain as the major foreign influence in Thailand; and the policy of containment of Communist aggression led the American Government to initiate a rapidly expanding role in the relations between the two countries. In brief, as the Cold War began, American interests were:

1. Geographical--Thailand composes a strategic area in the center of mainland Southeast Asia. After 1948, the surrounding countries became embroiled in bitter military conflicts either with their former colonial rulers or with Communist insurgencies. To American policy-makers, Thailand appeared as an oasis of stability in a region of turmoil. Any reluctance by the U.S. to cooperate with an authoritarian military regime was overcome by the need to protect Southeast Asia from falling under Communist rule.⁷
2. People--The Thai people, about thirty-two million, comprise the largest population of any state on the mainland of Southeast Asia. Approximately 85% are peasants, however, they are capable of sophisticated tasks. Thus, they could be trained by their own leaders for the defense and advancement of their country, or they could be trained by a hostile power to carry out the overthrow of their own Government. Further, unlike other nations in the area, the Thai do not suffer from intense pluralism. Rather, the nation is relatively well unified, and a large majority of the people are loyal to the King. Though minorities exist, they are a manageable and modest problem. The three million Chinese who control much of the private sector are satisfied with their economic status and play little role in international affairs.⁸
3. Resources--Thailand is the world's leading rice exporter and annually produces a surplus of in excess of one million tons. Further, a light industrial base has been developed and more manufactured goods are being produced locally. Over one hundred American firms operate in the area and Thai resources are important to American policy because they assist in the economic development of non-Communist countries in Asia. Thus, the control of Thai resources by a hostile power could be used to the disadvantage of the United States and the non-Communist nations in Southeast Asia.⁹

American foreign policy toward Thailand since the beginning of the Cold War can be divided into three phases. The first encompasses the period from about 1950 to 1961. During this era, the primary objective of the United States was to build the country into a "bastion" of the

⁷Frank C. Darling, "America and Thailand," Asian Survey, Vol. 7, No. 4 (April, 1967), pp. 215-216.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 217.

Free World and to prepare the country for an onslaught from Communist China. Despite the fact that overt aggression was unlikely, the United States rapidly expanded the Thai armed forces from 30,000 to 100,000 men. Though the country had very few domestic Communists, the Americans strengthened the Thai police forces and urged suppressive measures against opponents of the Government. A strong U.S. Army mission helped train the Thai military and large quantities of American armament were provided. In addition, a modest chemical aid program begun in 1947 was converted to military objectives.¹⁰

The internal repercussions of this policy were largely ignored by many American diplomats. With the large-scale military assistance from the United States, the Thai military leaders were able to expand their control into every phase of national life and corruption within the military leadership greatly surpassed that of former civilian regimes. Further, the constitutional institutions inaugurated after the war were completely abolished and political parties and organized pressure groups were forbidden if not controlled by the ruling regime.¹¹ Throughout this phase, Thailand did make considerable economic progress; but much of the new prosperity went to a few favored groups such as the high-ranking military officers, land owners and privileged Chinese merchants.

Thousands of civil servants remained underpaid and millions of peasants received only a fraction of the price obtained from the sale of their rice. Some advances were made in education; but again, progress

¹⁰Frank C. Darling, "Thailand: De-escalation and Uncertainty," Asian Survey, Vol. 9, No. 2 (February, 1969), p. 116.

¹¹Ibid.

was limited and, in many cases, reserved for the elite. Modern welfare services were restricted primarily to Bangkok and a few provincial centers, while secondary and primary schools outside the capital remained understaffed. To a certain degree, American policy during this first phase intensified the "split personality" which characterized the Thais at the end of the absolute monarchy. In diplomacy, finance, and trade where Americans and other foreigners dealt closely with the country, the Thais consistently exhibited a high level of intelligence and sophistication. Thus, the Kingdom's foreign policy realistically adjusted the national interest to the main forces of international politics. In addition, the country was secure, the currency sound and foreign trade expanding.

However, in domestic affairs where Americans did not directly participate, the Thai displayed immaturity and a low level of sophistication. Personal relationships continued to remain dominant in political life and little opportunity existed for the formation of political parties. The second phase of American policy in Thailand since World War II commenced in approximately 1961 and encompasses the period from that year to 1968. During this period, the major function of Thailand for American strategy in Southeast Asia was to serve as a base in the military struggle to preserve the independence of South Vietnam. American planes used airfields in Thailand located only a few hundred miles from targets in North Vietnam. Further, numerous logistic and support facilities were constructed and Bangkok served as a rest-and-relaxation center for U.S. servicemen on leave from Vietnam.¹²

¹²Fred Greene, U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1968), p. 118.

The goals of U.S. policy during the first phase—to prepare Thailand for external aggression—overlap to some degree with the objectives of the second phase. However, strategy in this phase rested on more realistic and rational grounds. South Vietnam was under intense Communist attack from both external and internal sources, and the U.S. and other non-Communist nations in the area felt they had a vital interest in preserving the independence and integrity of the former French colony. Thailand has played a crucial role in this endeavor and without the use of Thai bases, the U.S. military effort would be much more difficult and costly.

During this phase American policy in the military fields showed moderation. The militant anti-communism of the past was tempered and more emphasis was placed on economic and social development. With American assistance, the Thai Government gave more help to the provinces where units of modern technology have traditionally been quite sparse. Much of this program was concentrated on the strategic provinces of the Northeast. Improved roads now lead into formerly remote areas and for the first time in history universities have been constructed outside the capital city of Bangkok. Further, more elementary and secondary schools were built and the country, generally, experienced increased prosperity.¹³

However, the second phase is also characterized by the continual lingering of former political problems. Though the Government is more moderate than its predecessors, for few factions within the military leadership are vying for power and attempts to move to some form of constitutional

¹³Darling, "America and Thailand," p. 219.

government have been blocked by policies that emphasize order and security. In addition, the acute maldistribution of wealth continues to breed crime, and civil servants have not received pay raises since 1951.¹⁴

Post 1968 Developments

Thus, the third phase of U.S. policy toward the Kingdom emerges. This phase is post-1968 and is characterized by de-escalation and uncertainty. Winston Churchill once remarked that, "Sovereign nations possess no permanent friends and no permanent enemies; they only possess permanent interests."¹⁵ In 1968, certain aspects of this fundamental principle of international politics became painfully apparent to many members of the Thai Government. The de-escalation of American military power in the Vietnamese War and the possibility of a retrenchment of U.S. policy outside Southeast Asia aroused a growing sense of doubt and uncertainty among officials in the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These developments jolted them into a deeper realization that important sectors of their national life are closely related to the vagaries of international affairs.

Initial concern began when former President Johnson announced on March 31, 1968 that he was reducing the level of American military involvement in Vietnam and taking steps toward a negotiated peace settlement with the Hanoi government. As the American presidential campaign progressed, Thai Foreign Affairs officials became increasingly worried

¹⁴Darling, "America and Thailand," p. 219.

¹⁵Darling, "Thailand: De-escalation and Uncertainty," p. 115.

over numerous demands--from critics of both major political parties--for a disengagement of American power from Southeast Asia. In addition, public appeals for withdrawal from Vietnam and claims that the U.S. has only a "limited obligation" in Thailand had a chilling effect on many members of the Thai Government.

In brief, officials in Bangkok became increasingly fearful that the U.S. policy which had been followed for several decades might be coming to an end. At mid-year 1968, Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman declared, "The United States has tried to raise some doubts in our minds, and it has succeeded. It has succeeded in raising doubts in its own mind."¹⁶ This uncertainty heightened as external and internal Communist threats continued to confront the Kingdom. On the third anniversary of the Communist Underground Organization--the Thai Patriotic Front--Peking appealed for renewed efforts against American "Imperialism." Further, insurgencies within Thailand became more active in the Northeast and extreme South.¹⁷

Thus, in an official visit to Washington, D.C., in May, 1968, Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn sought assurances from the Johnson Administration that the United States would not abandon its obligations to defend Thailand following a settlement of the Vietnam War. Simultaneously, with Kittikachorn's visit to the United States, the Minister of National Development headed a 38-member trade mission to New York appealing for more private American investment in the Thai economy. Offering attractive

¹⁶J. L. S. Girling, "Thailand's New Course," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Fall, 1969), p. 347.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 348.

trade and investment incentives, the Kingdom has promoted an expanded economic program with the hope that American efforts for peace and stability in the area will continue to stress economic development (through both public and private channels) following the end of the Vietnam conflict.¹⁸

Toward the latter portion of 1968, this extreme uncertainty appeared somewhat unjustified and U.S. policy makers seemed to maintain a genuine interest in Thailand's security and prosperity. A joint communique issued on July 9 reiterated America's determination to uphold its treaty commitments in Thailand. It stated:

The President re-emphasized the determination of the United States to stand by its treaty commitments to Thailand and its other allies in Asia. . . . He noted the pledge that he had given at the time of his visit to Bangkok in 1966 that the commitment of the United States was not of a particular party or administration, but of the people of the United States, and that, 'America keeps its commitments.'¹⁹

However, in September, 1969, talks between the two countries regarding the departure of U.S. forces from the Kingdom grew directly out of Thai concern for the country's security after the end of the Vietnam War. Further, President Nixon's announcement of the withdrawal of the first 25,000 men from Vietnam, and the President's emphasis on a future "low visibility" military posture in Southeast Asia disappointed Thai leaders who had welcomed Nixon's election as the implementation of a harder-line policy. In addition, on August 21, 1969, Secretary of Defense

¹⁸Darling, "Thailand: De-escalation and uncertainty," p. 116.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 117.

Melvin Laird stated that the Nixon Administration did not feel bound by the 1965 contingency plan and a further withdrawal of 35,000 troops from Vietnam was not communicated (beforehand) to Bangkok.²⁰

Last, in July, 1969, following a speech in Bangkok, President Nixon met with Thai leaders regarding the levels of U.S. forces in Thailand. At that time there were approximately 48,000 personnel, mostly U.S. Air Force, in Thailand. Subsequently, following talks in New York, President Nixon and Prime Minister Kittikachorn announced on September 30, 1969, that the two governments had agreed that 6,000 U.S. military personnel would be withdrawn from Thailand by July 1, 1970. This was carried out on schedule.²¹ Further, it was announced that the two governments would continue to evaluate the level of U.S. forces in Thailand in light of developments in Vietnam. Following further consultations, it was announced on September 8, 1970, that an additional 9,800 U.S. personnel would be withdrawn by July 1, 1971.²²

In addition to withdrawal announcements, other aspects of Thai-U.S. relations have displayed strains. Government spokesmen in Bangkok were incensed and the American Government embarrassed when a Senate foreign relations subcommittee disclosed that under a secret agreement signed in 1967, the U.S. had paid the Thai Government more than \$200

²⁰Girling, "Thailand's New Course," p. 348.

²¹U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, Pubn. No. 7961, November, 1970, p. 7.

²²Ibid.

million to send troops to Vietnam.²³ Reportedly, to encourage the Thais to assign an elite 11,000 man division to Vietnam, the U.S. agreed to increase its military assistance and to supply the Thais with a battery of Hawk antiaircraft missiles. Foreign Minister Khoman decried, "The politicians of dubious morality who misrepresented this accord for the sharing of responsibilities as a decision by the United States to engage mercenaries."²⁴

A second element of strain on relations also became evident in 1970. The policy of disengagement has resulted in extreme bitterness in certain Government circles. Foreign Minister Khoman's wrath was again vented against "certain elements of American society who began to use this country as their favorite practice target"²⁵ in a speech to the American Chamber of Commerce in July, 1970:

One may ask in bewilderment why those immature and irresponsible elements in the U.S. have shown persistence in persecuting and molesting such a loyal friend and partner as Thailand. . . .In time of stress and strain the scum comes to the surface. It was those unwholesome elements which poisoned the hearts and minds and adulterated the sound and solid traditions of a great people. . . .For having cooperated wholeheartedly with the United States, Thailand had had to endure and suffer at the hands of those ugly Americans. . . . It seems inescapable that relations between Thailand and the United States will evolve toward a more selective basis.²⁶

Thus, in 1970 as the U.S. moved toward a "low profile" and eventual

²³Clark D. Neher, "Thailand: Toward Fundamental Change," Asian Survey, Vol. 11, No. 2 (February, 1971), p. 136.

²⁴Ibid., p. 137.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

disengagement in Southeast Asia, Thailand began looking in new directions for a counterweight to the perceived Communist threat. Thai officials began stressing the need for an Asian front to include the major non-Communist nations of the region.²⁷ In addition, Prime Minister Kittikachorn announced that all Thai troops in Vietnam would be withdrawn by 1972. Next, he agreed to meet with North Vietnamese officials to discuss the repatriation of some 40,000 Vietnamese refugees living in Thailand. Finally, in 1970, Thailand, for the first time, signed trade agreements with Eastern European nations.²⁸

In essence, the Thai leadership has not been gleeful over President Nixon's moves to shift much of the burden of defending Southeast Asia to Asians. However, at least some in the ruling elite have long favored closer relations among the Southeast Asian nations. Thailand may be expected to strengthen ties with such countries as the Philippines, Indonesia, and possibly, develop a closer relationship with Peking. The key to the Prime Minister's attitude toward China is almost certainly the realization that after 1968, the coincidence of interests between Thailand and the United States is receding; and, thus, the Thais can no longer rely on America's protecting presence. Thailand will certainly continue to utilize American military and economic assistance, but they are also seeking an alternative to the former policy of dependence by attempting to lessen the hostility of Communist powers and by initiating steps to build a non-Communist counterweight through regional cooperation. Possibly,

²⁷Neher, "Thailand: Toward Fundamental Change," p. 137.

²⁸Ibid.

this could serve as a "power base" in the area, which American public opinion and the American Government would consider worth supporting.

The Nixon Doctrine

This "low visibility" posture set forth by the United States appears to contain an implicit command directed toward the Southeast Asian nations. It seems to be telling them that they must assume a greater burden and obligation for their own defense. The "low posture" policy in Asia (also sometimes referred to as the "Nixon Doctrine") has been enunciated on several occasions. In a lengthy statement at Bangkok, Thailand on July 28, 1969, the President stated:

First, we remain involved in Asia. We are a Pacific Power. We have learned that peace for us is much less likely if there is no peace in Asia. Second, a growing sense of Asian identity and concrete action toward Asian cooperation are creating a new and healthy pattern of international relationships in the region. Our Asian friends, especially in Japan, are in a position to shoulder larger responsibilities for the peaceful progress of the area. Third, while we will maintain our interests in Asia and them commitments that flow from them, the chances taking place in that region enable us to chance the character of our involvement. The responsibilities once borne by the United States at such great cost can now be shared. Our important interests and those of our friends are still threatened by those nations which would exploit change and which proclaim hostility to the United States as one of the fundamental tenets of their policies. We do not assume that these nations will always remain hostile, and will work toward improved relationships wherever possible.

At the beginning of my trip through Asia last summer, I described at Guam the principles that underlie our cooperative approach to the defense of our common interests. In my speech on November 3, I summarized the key elements of this approach.

--The United States will keep all its treaty commitments.

--We shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us, or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security and the security of the region as a whole.

--In cases involving other types of aggression we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested and as appropriate. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense.

This approach requires our commitment to helping our partners develop their own strength. In doing so, we must strike a careful balance. If we do too little to help them--and erode their belief in our commitments--they may lose the necessary will to conduct their own self-defense or become disheartened about prospects of development. Yet, if we do too much, and American forces do what local forces can and should be doing, we promote dependence rather than independence.

The partnership we seek involves not only defense. Its ultimate goal must be equally close cooperation over a much broader range of concern--economic as well as political and military. For in that close cooperation with our Asian friends lies our mutual commitment to peace in Asia and the world. Our goal must be particularly close cooperation for economic development. Here, too, our most effective contribution will be to support Asian initiatives in an Asian framework.

While I was in South Asia, I stated our view of the method and purpose of our economic assistance to Asia. These words were spoken in Pakistan, but they express our goals as well for India and all of Asia.

I wish to communicate my Government's conviction that Asian hands must shape the Asian future. This is true, for example, with respect to economic aid, for it must be related to the total pattern of a nation's life. It must support the unique aspirations of each people. Its purpose is to encourage self-reliance, not dependence.

The fostering of self-reliance is the new purpose and direction of American involvement in Asia.

--While we have established general guidelines on American responses to Asian conflicts, in practice the specific circumstances of each case require careful study. . . . If we limit our own involvement

in the interest of encouraging local self-reliance, and the threat turns out to have been more serious than we had judged, we will only have created still more dangerous choices. On the other hand, if we become unwisely involved, we risk stifling the local contribution which is the key to our long-run commitment to Asia.

--The success of our Asia policy depends not only on the strength of our partnership with our Asian friends, but also on our relations with mainland China and the Soviet Union. We have no desire to impose our own prescriptions for relationships in Asia. We have described in the Nixon Doctrine our conception of our relations with Asian nations. We hope that other great powers will act in a similar spirit and not seek hegemony.

--A sound relationship with Japan is crucial in our common effort to secure peace, security and a rising living standard in the Pacific area. We look forward to extending the cooperative relationship we deepened in 1969. But we shall not ask Japan to assume responsibilities inconsistent with the deeply felt concerns of its people.

--In South Asia, our good relations with India and Pakistan should not obscure the concrete dilemmas we will face. How can we bring home to both, for example, our serious concern over the waste of their limited resources in an arms race, yet recognize their legitimate interests in self-defense?

--Asian regionalism is at its beginning. We will confront subtle decisions as we seek to help maintain its momentum without supplanting Asian direction of the effort.

All these issues will confront this administration with varying intensity over the coming years. We are planning now to meet challenges and anticipate crises. Our purpose in 1969 has been to make sure none was ignored or underestimated. The task ahead--for Asians and Americans--is to address all these issues within the imagination, realism and boldness their solutions demand if lasting peace is to come to Asia.²⁹

²⁹U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, The United States Role in Asia, Pubn. No. P-444, February, 1970, pp. 1-4.

Subsequently, on February 18, 1970, in his report to Congress on Foreign Affairs the President stated:

What we seek for Asia is a community of free nations able to go their own way and seek their own destiny with whatever cooperation we can provide--a community of independent Asian countries, each maintaining its own traditions and yet each developing through mutual cooperation. In such an arrangement, we stand ready to play a responsible role in accordance with our commitments and basic interests.³⁰

Thus, in these statements we can visualize at least some of the factors which the President was attempting to enunciate. First, and foremost, the United States will no longer assume the primary defense role for countries of the area when confronted by insurgency-type conflicts but will look to the nation directly threatened to assume the manpower burden for its defense. This has been quite evident in Vietnam where troop withdrawals have averaged 12,000 men a month since 1969, and troop strength is supposed to be down to 184,000 by December, 1971.³¹ It was approximately 550,000 in 1968.³² The "Vietnamization" program somewhat symbolizes this factor. Second, the Doctrine maintains that all treaty commitments will be kept and that a nuclear shield will be provided if certain nations in the area are threatened by a nuclear power. Third, the Doctrine implies increased cooperation in the economic sphere as well as defense. But again, the President emphasized that the most

³⁰U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, The United States Role in Asia, Pubn. No. P-444, February, 1970, pp. 1-4.

³¹"Nixon on Vietnam: More of the Same," Newsweek, Vol. 77, No. 16 (April 19, 1971), p. 26.

³²Ibid.

important contribution will be for the United States to support Asian initiatives in an Asian framework. Last, the President spoke of Asian regionalism and sustaining its momentum. Ultimately the Doctrine appears to be telling the Asian nations that they must assume the primary role in the battle for security, economic growth and defense.

Perhaps a more concise picture can be gained of this "low posture" from the President's article written in Foreign Affairs.³³ Referring to the future of Asia, Nixon states that it will be "one in which U.S. leadership is exercised with restraint, with respect for our partners and with a sophisticated discretion that ensures a genuinely Asian idiom and Asian origin for whatever new Asian institutions are developed."³⁴ He further stated:

In a design for Asia's future, there is no room for heavy-handed American pressures; there is need for subtle encouragement of the kind of Asian initiatives that help bring the design to reality. The distinction may seem superficial, but in fact it is central both to the kind of Asia we want and to the effectiveness of the means of achieving it. The central pattern of the future in U.S.-Asian relations must be American support for Asian initiatives.³⁵

In essence, a shifting of the burden is what seems to be transpiring, and further, a declining direct American presence. This has been evidenced not only in Thailand and Vietnam but also in South Korea (20,000), Okinawa (5,000), and Japan (12,000). Further, Okinawa will revert to the Japanese in 1972, and troops have been removed from Taiwan.³⁶

³³Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 1 (October, 1967), p. 124.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶U.S., Department of State, Bulletin, U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's, Vol. 64, No. 1656, March 22, 1971, p. 347.

Obviously, it should not be assumed that the United States is withdrawing completely. Actually, some will argue that the U.S. is simply implementing a modified presence and will no longer play the "Marshall Dillon" role. This viewpoint contains some credence as several years ago money was proposed for modernization of the U.S. Navy when Vietnam subsides. Supposedly, one of the functions of this modernized Navy will be to maintain a quick-reacting type task force throughout Asian waters as well as in other parts of the world. Thus, one might argue that Marshall Dillon will now "walk on water" rather than inserting his feet in a swampy jungle quagmire. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird was more explicit (than previously) on April 13, 1971, regarding the future American military presence in Southeast Asia. He states that, "The United States will keep air and naval power in Southeast Asia, under the long-range Nixon Doctrine, after American ground troops are withdrawn."³⁷ He continued, "To state that we would not have a presence in Asia under this realistic deterrent strategy . . . would be very misleading."³⁸

Thus, it is obvious that an indirect presence is likely in the military sphere. In addition, in the economic sphere the U.S. will continue to supply economic aid, but it will be in support of Asian initiatives and will not smell of hegemony. In brief, Southeast Asians must assume the main responsibility for their economic growth and defense security, and U.S. policy appears to be pointing toward this objective. Thailand

³⁷ "U.S. to Continue Presence in Asia," The Missoulian, April 14, 1971, p. 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

has, for several decades, assumed special significance for the United States for several reasons. First, diplomatic relations have existed between the two countries for a longer period of time than between the U.S. and any other Asian nation. Second, Thailand is a stable and fairly self-subsistent nation in an area where these factors are somewhat rare. Third, the kingdom has never been colonized and has a fairly high degree of unity. Fourth, Thailand occupies a somewhat strategic geographical location on mainland Southeast Asia and has been exhibiting economic growth at a respectable rate. The U.S. commitment to Thailand was epitomized by Dean Rusk in 1962 when he made a statement concerning SEATO. He stated, "In the event of Communist armed attack against Thailand, the SEATO obligation of the United States to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes is individual as well as collective."³⁹ To some people in both countries this meant that the U.S. would "stand alone" to defend Thailand.

However, there seems little doubt that the Thai's special and somewhat privileged position is coming to an end. Further, if the overpowering American presence is receding in Thailand, then it seems evident that all of the Southeast Asian leaders can look forward to a somewhat congruent policy toward their nations. Obviously, the "low posture" and declining presence have been apparent in Vietnam, Japan, South Korea, and other nations. Thus, one begins to speculate on what may fill this power vacuum evolving from the declining American presence. It appears that two forces are evolving to shape the Asian future of the late 1970's

³⁹U.S., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, Pubn. No. 7961, November, 1970.

and 1980's. These two forces are regionalism and quadrilateralism. Though Southeast Asias Regional Groupings have had little potential in the past, there appears to be reason for at least cautious optimism for them in the future. This force will be discussed in the following chapter. The second emerging force--that of quadrilateralism will be viewed in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

REGIONALISM

Feasibility of Regionalism

Regional economic and security arrangements appear to be appropriate for Southeast Asia for several reasons. First, the major security arrangements in the region during the next decades will most likely be for counterinsurgency-type forces and the likeliest areas to be threatened are in Southeast Asia. Second, in the aftermath of the Vietnam quagmire, the United States is seeking to reduce the need for commitment of its own combat forces in the area. Third, Southeast Asian perceptions of the need to meet insurgent threats have been heightened by Britain's withdrawal from Singapore and the Thai insurgency. Fourth, the formation of ASEAN in 1967--Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore¹--brought together the most important countries of Southeast Asia into a group dedicated to regional cooperation. The fact that five nations formed this group seems to reflect a conviction that development goals of Southeast Asian states make it necessary for them to pool their resources. This convergence may suggest that if outside powers provide relevant assistance, the next decades may witness the development of successful economic and defense cooperation in and among the countries of Southeast Asia. In the regard, Richard Butwell states: "If there is

¹Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)--A multipurpose, indigenous and politically neutral organization.

a regional body in being that could evolve into a successor to SEATO as a regional peace-keeping instrument, it is probably ASEAN."²

Further, in his celebrated article in Foreign Affairs, Richard Nixon discusses the transformation of Asia and states: "One key to this transformation is Asian regionalism."³ Since 1965, it has become evident that the United States has again begun to encourage multilateralism in Southeast Asia. This recent multilateralism looks beyond military alliances toward groupings of Asian states based on wider and more enduring convergencies of interest. This shift was first noted in April of 1965 when former President Johnson, in a speech at Johns Hopkins University, announced a \$1 billion program to encourage regional development in Southeast Asia.⁴

Encouragement of regionalism has been initiated by the United States for two reasons. First, the expectation exists that regional cooperation, especially among the smaller countries, can aid in speeding the processes of economic development. For example, the U.S. is pressing for the establishment of a common market in Latin America. However, few would argue that a common market approach is appropriate for Asia at present. Thus, the United States is encouraging other forms of

²Richard Butwell, "The Philippines Under Marcos," Current History, Vol. 58, No. 344 (April, 1970), p. 201.

³Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 1 (October, 1967), p. 111.

⁴Bernard K. Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Southeast Asia (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Company, 1969), p. 104.

economic regionalism. A prime example is the establishment of the Asian Development Bank. In addition, a variety of other cooperative ventures are being encouraged. Among these is a series of Southeast Asian Ministerial Conferences on higher education and transportation.

These are essentially economic aspects of regionalism. The other aspect, which has become increasingly apparent, is based more clearly on political considerations. This part of American interest stems from the belief that if regional cohesion develops in Asia, especially if it includes Japan, it will help establish an added power center. Resultingly, in the short run with the added development and stability that regional cooperation may bring, Asian states will be less susceptible to subversion and be better able to defend themselves.

In the long run, the U.S. hope appears to be that Asian regionalism will lead to a multibloc system in the area in the 1970s and 80s. This would be somewhat similar to a balance-of-power system and what the United States seeks in the area seems to be a structure which is multi-centered and not tightly bi-polar. Finally, this multi-polarized structure would (allegedly) lessen the probability of war.

This restructuring of the Asian system appears to be no accident, or mere by-product of American actions. Instead it appears to have been a conscious goal of most U.S. officials including the President himself. To say that the U.S. hopes to help reshape the Asian system--by virtue of a more cohesive Southeast Asia--is really saying that American objectives are changing. No doubt, the U.S. interest in the area will remain the same--to prevent any one nation dominance in the region--but there is no desire to press that interest to the point of conflict with China. The desire to avoid such a collision with China

explains the American concern today to develop conditions that can lead to a multipolar Asia.⁵ On October 17, 1966, at the East-West Center in Honolulu, former President Johnson stated: "No single nation can or should be permitted to dominate the Pacific region."⁶ He also alluded to regional cooperation when he stated: "One after another, the nations of Asia are casting off the spent slogans of earlier narrow nationalism. . . . One after another, they are grasping the realities of an interdependent Asia."⁷ The President cited the Asian Development Bank, Asian and Pacific Council and other undertakings as evidence of the new cooperation.

Further, in a speech at Middlebury College on June 12, 1967, Walt W. Rostow, Johnson's assistant for national security affairs, stated: "We are finding in regionalism, a new relationship to the world community somewhere between the overwhelming responsibility we assumed in the early post-war years--as we moved in to fill vacuums of power . . . and a return to nationalism."⁸ In brief, the degree of political significance for the U.S. lies in the ability of Southeast Asian regionalism to make a constructive contribution toward a multipolar Asia. A Southeast Asia that remains divided will not only fail to contribute to multipolarity, it will continue to perpetuate the tight bipolarity which is considered dangerous. Thus, to the

⁵Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Southeast Asia, p. 67.

⁶Seville R. Davis, "Containment in Asia," Christian Science Monitor, October 19, 1966, p. 14.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Southeast Asia, p. 69.

extent that Southeast Asian states are weak and aim to embark in diverse and separate directions in search of security and development, two outcomes might appear and tend to maintain the present bipolarity.

One outcome might represent the successful achievement of Communist China's goals as Fred Greene has concluded that China's desire is "for predominance in the eastern half of Asia."⁹ If this objective were achieved the likely result might lead the U.S. into policies even more hostile and suspicious of China than is the case at present. In addition, it is possible that this may be the impact upon Japan as well, and certainly the effect would not be a loosening of the present bipolarity. The second outcome of a continued weakness and division in Southeast Asia might represent the opposite pole: the continued need by Southeast Asia to rely on the United States.

This result would be somewhat of a continuance of the present situation in Asia; for example, the Thai and Philippine Alliances with the U.S. and the tendency of Indonesia to look to Washington for assistance. This outcome can only be expected to heighten Chinese suspicions and aggravate many tendencies that could lead her to initiate aggressive behavior in Asia. In essence, it seems apparent that regionalism is a vehicle which the U.S. intends to utilize to serve her national interest in Asia. This national interest--to prevent a direct confrontation with China--will thus, be supported by an Asian structure characterized by a loosening of bipolarity and the subsequent emergence of multipolarity. The U.S. has chosen to de-escalate the confrontation with China, and further, is modifying its approach to

⁹Fred Greene, U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia, p. 195.

prevent one nation from dominating. Though U.S. actions have spurred Asian regionalism there are a number of reasons why there has been a renewal of interest in regionalism within the area.¹⁰ No longer are Asian leaders simply paying "lip service" to U.S. proposals but are taking positive action, for several reasons.

First, there is incentive emanating from China. For the past few decades scholars have debated and feuded in some cases regarding the precise goals of China in Asia. This writer is of the opinion that China's intentions are fairly clear. China intends to achieve great-power status, and in the tradition of great powers, she expects to be regarded as dominant in the region of the world in which she lives. Several analysts concur in this opinion.¹¹

In the immediate future it appears for geographical reasons that any Chinese expansion must be in the direction of Southeast Asia. The Soviet Union is a powerful presence to China's North and West. Similarly, on her eastern flank a dynamic and somewhat prosperous Japan makes it pointless to attempt major influence at present. In contrast, Southeast Asia represents a power vacuum and in contrast to other areas, is much more ideal for the application of Mao's revolutionary doctrines. Further, as a region still characterized by a poverty-ridden population, Southeast

¹⁰Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Southeast Asia, p. 75.

¹¹A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia(New York: Random House, Inc., 1960), p. 65; Richard G. Boyd, Communist China's Foreign Policy(New York: Frederick Praeger Company, 1962), p. 87; Fred Greene, U.S. Policy and the Security of Asia, p. 195; Harold Hinton, Communist China in World Politics(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 394.

Asia holds the promise of greater gains with less risk and effort than is involved in other areas adjacent to China. Finally, it is in Southeast Asia where the power and policies of the United States--China's proclaimed major enemy--are seen as provocative and need to be countered and neutralized.

Yet some authors--David Mozingo¹² and others--still argue that Mao's foreign policies are simply defensive-response reactions to U.S. actions and that China will live at peace with any Southeast Asian state which is disassociated from the United States. This writer feels that this interpretation is not only optimistic but naive for several reasons. First, in 1967 Peking repeatedly called for the overthrow of the "Rahman puppet clique" in Malaysia, a government that was not tied to the U.S.¹³ Further, in 1965, there was Chinese involvement in an attempt to stage a coup in Indonesia--a country which had intimately close ties with Peking at the time.¹⁴ Even in Cambodia in 1968, Prince Sihanouk suspected Chinese support for groups opposed to him.¹⁵ This came despite the fact that earlier he had referred to China as Cambodia's best friend. In a formal statement he also added that "insurgents in Laos and Thailand act on the orders of North Vietnam and China."¹⁶

¹²David Mozingo, "Containment in Asia Reconsidered," World Politics, Vol. 19, No. 3 (April, 1967), pp. 361-377.

¹³Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 76.

¹⁴J. V. van der Kroef, "Gestapu in Indonesia," Orbis, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer, 1966), p. 467.

¹⁵Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 77.

¹⁶Ibid.

Burma provides another interesting example. After mid-year 1967, Rangoon found that General Ne Win was branded a traitor by Peking. Subsequently, Peking has frequently called for, "all the Burmese people to rise up to strive for the complete overthrow of the Ne Win military government and the establishment of a People's Democratic and United Front Government."¹⁷ In late 1968, there were reports of a mysterious new Chinese assisted "Northeast Command,"¹⁸ and it seemed that China was laying the base for some type of united front. Thus, this stern posture toward Burma is somewhat unexplainable, especially since Ne Win had gone out of his way to placate Peking. If Peking is simply reacting to the U.S. then she is "reacting" to threats that few others find perceivable. These brief examples illustrate that Peking may not necessarily seek friendly relations with neutral nations of Southeast Asia.

A much more plausible explanation is that Peking seeks friendly relations with governments in Asia who are subject to major Chinese influence. All in all, those who continue to maintain that China is simply reacting to U.S. presence are, in my opinion, simply failing to recognize the realities of the situation and are engaging in superficial analysis. Rather, it seems that China is behaving more in line with the traditional behavior patterns of great powers. Further, those who deny the need for countervailing power around China reflect an extremely naive view of the way Chinese power is likely to be used. An Australian scholar has stated:

¹⁷Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 77.

¹⁸"Burma: The Insurgency, "Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 44 (October 17, 1968), p. 10.

To argue in 1966 that China could never be expected to acquiesce in a rival power structure in Southeast Asia is precisely equivalent to arguing in 1946-47 that Russia could never be expected to tolerate a rival power structure in Western Europe. Such a situation was possible and Russia did in fact come to accept it, and twenty years later after the process began . . . the prospects for peace look a good deal better than when it was initiated. To assume that China must be conceded unchecked hegemony in South Asia is to acquiesce in so substantial an addition to her future power-base (taking into account manpower, resources and nuclear weapons) that it is difficult to see the consequent world finding a way to live quietly or to keep its crises manageable. There is of course no present similarity between the situation of South Asia and that of Western Europe. That is why the intervention of the outside powers over a long transition period (perhaps twenty years) is likely to remain necessary.¹⁹

In broad terms this is a view held by leaders in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam. Even Prince Sihanouk stated in 1967 that, "China does not swallow Cambodia because of the Americans."²⁰ In essence, this is the primary reason for a revived interest in regionalism in the Southeast Asian nations; fear of Chinese domination. From the Asian standpoint, China is the traditional great power of the region, with a long history of exercising considerable influence. Considering the fact that China is composed of one of the great and cohesive world cultures, it is not surprising that her presence has long impressed the people of Southeast Asia. However, though several Asian nations have been deeply influenced and shaped by Chinese culture (Japan and Vietnam, for example) China has not become endeared to the

¹⁹Coral Bell, "Towards a Stable Asia," The World Today, Vol. 22, (April, 1966), p. 190.

²⁰"The Sihanouk Trail," Christian Science Monitor, October 16, 1967, p. 18.

people on her borders. She is still the giant of the region and looked upon with a good amount of suspicion.

A second factor which has caused Asian leaders to turn to regionalism concerns the anxieties which the small states feel toward the nanyang or "overseas" Chinese. Throughout the area the Chinese exercise economic dominance that is in some cases resented, feared and distrusted. The movement of the Chinese to Southeast Asia is relatively recent; it was accelerated greatly by the economic and administrative policies of colonial regimes of the past centuries. Despite their somewhat recent arrival, the Chinese have been the dominant ethnic group in economic matters in Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand and in some respects in Indonesia and the Philippines.²¹

It is quite true that in some countries the Chinese have been smoothly assimilated and in some have not occupied the role as in other regimes, but this qualification does not detract from the fact that a basic racism exists and is aimed at local Chinese. This is one of Southeast Asia's distinguishing characteristics and in the years since independence, there have been many instances of abuse and intimidation. In brief, two China's exist in the minds of many Southeast Asians: China the great and fearsome nation, and China the source of the dominated alien group at home. Neither is a positive factor. It is in this perspective that the concept of regional cooperation has been revived.

China's unfriendliness has provided the factor which the environment for regional cooperation has lacked: a common perception of threat. Since this was lacking, the concept of regionalism had no great

²¹Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, pp. 81-82.

urgency. However, there seems little doubt that China cannot be regarded as a passive element in Asia's affairs and could become a troublesome participant if nations of the area lack unity. The third factor which has caused nations of the area to turn to regionalism is a more positive one and concerns economic potential. It should be mentioned that, at present, few Southeast Asian leaders think of regional cooperation as a major input to defense needs. Most recognize that defense requirements cannot be met with local resources and that an American presence must provide an indispensable security framework.

Rather, leaders in the area seem to see in regional cooperation a means of achieving some type of solidarity and unity. Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman is an exception to this and has viewed regional cooperation as more oriented toward political and security affairs. In 1968, he states: "The motivations are not only economic; the motivations are political."²² For many leaders, however, it has been more comfortable to speak only in economic terms and this has been the primary publicly expressed justification to date.

Some Asian economists stress that many of the developmental needs of Southeast Asia--technical know-how, improved agricultural productivity, and capital availability--can be met through greater intra-Asian cooperation. One of these, Professor Hiroshi Kitamura of the United Nations has long urged that Southeast Asian countries can reap considerable benefits through regional harmony in their industrial development programs.²³ Initially, some areas of industrialization (steel, aluminum)

²²"Thailand: Economic Expansion," Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 44 (October 17, 1968), p. 156.

²³Bernard K. Gordon, The Dimension of Conflict in Southeast Asia (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 141-166.

require considerable capital and one of the smaller states acting alone, may not be able to manage the outlay. In addition, world money markets are likely to be attracted to opportunities which reflect a regional plan. The Governor of the Bank of Thailand has also expressed the opinion that money markets are more likely to be attracted if two or more countries do not duplicate facilities.²⁴

Asian specialists have maintained their pro arguments for several years and in 1965 and 1966, the United States and Japan began to reconsider their negative assessments. The Japanese reversed their position in 1965 and the United States followed in 1966 with each committing \$200 million to the Asian Development Bank.²⁵ Thus, a final factor which has hastened interest in Asian regionalism is that leading outsiders are in support of the concept. Thus, if there are any positive aspects of the Vietnam War, one might be that it has given the countries of the area the time to begin restructuring their regional politics. As early as 1966, Thanat Khoman stated that, "The long-range hope is to build an effective Pacific community--to forge one that will be a successful deterrent to aggression."²⁶

An Australian writer has stated: "The U.S. stand in Vietnam has both stimulated interest in and opened up the prospect of much closer relationships between the free Asian states. Instead of fretting about how to live with communism, the Southeast Asians have now become concerned

²⁴Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 85.

²⁵Ibid., p. 87.

²⁶"Thai Leaders in New York," Washington Post, October 30, 1966, p. 29.

about finding a way to live with each other, conscious as never before that by hanging together they will avoid the danger of being hanged separately."²⁷ In essence, there are three primary reasons why there has been a renewed and more constructive interest in regionalism in Southeast Asia. First, there is a fear of China, the monolith of the North and of the alien locals who have wielded considerable economic power in the countries of Southeast Asia. Second, there is at least a chance of economic gain through more economic cooperation and interdependence. Finally, with the blessings and support of the U.S. and Japan the countries are much more confident when taking steps in this direction.

Earlier Attempts at Regionalism

To date there have been several attempts at regional cooperation; and before discussing ASEAN in detail, it seems appropriate to discuss earlier attempts that culminated in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). The Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) had its origins in the year of 1959 when the Prime Minister of Malaysia and President Garcia of the Philippines conferred in Manila. Soon thereafter the Malaysian leader Abdul Rahman began to circulate proposals for a Southeast Asia Regional Organization. This proposal came to the attention of Thai Foreign Minister Khoman and in 1961 it was agreed that Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines would proceed with the establishment of ASA. It was formally created in a meeting at Bangkok, Thailand, in July of 1961. The initial goals of the organization were somewhat idealistic. They

²⁷Denis Warner, "First Steps Toward an Asian Common Market," The Reporter, Vol. 35, (May 18, 1967), p. 24.

included talk of a free trade area, a three-nation airline and a shipping service and even a common market. Secondary goals included educational exchanges, joint training of agriculture technicians and joint programs of industrial development.²⁸

It was soon evident that most interest centered on projects in the economic field. In early 1963, a number of meetings had taken place and broad outlines were discernible. The structure had developed on three separate levels. The first, and the one which had given ASA its birth, was an annual foreign minister's meeting. The second level was comprised of a group known as the Joint Working Party. This body represented senior officials in various ministries of the three governments and generally made recommendations regarding final agreements of ASA. The third level was the working committees who conducted detailed discussions and examinations of proposed cooperative projects.²⁹ Examples of these committees included those concerned with shipping, trade liberalization, fisheries, and agriculture.

In mid-1963, as this structure was evolving, the organization ceased operation due to conflicting claims to Borneo between Malaysia and the Philippines. Unfortunately, the organization had just completed its first year and was just beginning to outline some creative steps. One of these was the "ASA Fund."³⁰ This fund was an initial three million dollar subscription from each government and was to be used for financing

²⁸Gordon, The Dimensions of Conflict in Southeast Asia, Chs. V, VI.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 101.

of joint research projects. This was a somewhat unprecedented development and suggested that the three governments were beginning to look upon the small subregional group with genuine, though limited, expectations of accomplishment. In a sense ASA operations went to the deep freeze from 1963 to 1966 but re-emerged in 1966.

This recovery was the first indication that regional cooperation in Southeast Asia had a certain amount of dynamism. In retrospect, though ASA achieved few tangible results, it might be looked upon as a success for several reasons. First, it represented an unprecedented and indigenous Asian effort and second, it set the programs and procedures for future steps. In addition, it increased communications and understanding among its members and further, its most practical contribution was probably the mere fact that it survived. Owing to this a strong appeal to Southeast Asia's elites was begun and eventually led to Indonesia's participation in ASEAN in 1967. Thus, with the birth of ASEAN in 1967 the two major drawbacks of ASA--too small a membership and a too Western-oriented group--were removed.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is actually the result of a merger between ASA and Maphilindo.³¹ Maphilindo was created in 1963 and though a loose consultive oriented body of the three Malay nations (Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia) it was given considerable attention for two reasons. First, Indonesia was a participating nation and previously had avoided regional cooperation proposals. Second, it was realized that Indonesia was a fairly productive nation in Southeast Asia and that her participation in regional cooperation was

³¹Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 111.

highly desirable.

Initially, Indonesia's distaste for entering into the ASEAN scheme was explained by distaste for aligning themselves with a western leaning organization and further since they consider themselves the natural leader of the region they did not want to humble themselves by asking for membership. Thus, in August of 1966, Thai Foreign Minister Khoman visited Djakarta and discussed regional cooperation with Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik.³² Subsequently, in December a document was circulated from Bangkok to the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia which was a careful and conscious merging of the purposes of ASA with much of the style of Maphilindo.

This was the SEARC proposal (Southeast Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). Ultimately, through the efforts of Khoman and Adam Malik differences concerning refinement of this proposal were resolved. During this formation period, Thai and Indonesian leaders both gave a remarkable amount of time to the task of creating the multinational organization. Malik, during April and May of 1967, made a series of trips throughout Southeast Asia with two purposes in mind. The first was to inform the neutral states of Burma and Cambodia of Indonesia's plans for a new regional group and second, to negotiate with other leaders regarding the launching of the new group.³³

³²"Thai-Indonesia Confer," New York Times, August 30, 1966, p. 5.

³³Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 118.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Meanwhile Khoman attempted to persuade Malaysian leaders to accept Indonesia's new course. When finally successful, Khoman's reputation as a negotiator was greatly enhanced and represented somewhat of a triumph for him as he had long recognized that bipolarity is not only dangerous but especially uncomfortable for the smaller states of Asia.³⁴ Thus, ASEAN was formed at Bangkok on August 8, 1967. Subsequently, writing in Foreign Affairs, Adam Malik gave the organization strong endorsement and emphasized its neutral nature.³⁵

The significance of ASEAN is that it is the first general, indigenous and politically neutral effort in Southeast Asian regional cooperation. Its characteristic as a general or multipurpose organization means that ASEAN must be distinguished from groups devoted to specific functions such as Mekong Development Committee and Southeast Asian Ministerial Conferences on Education (SEAMES). Most of these are narrowly based. The indigenous nature of ASEAN should also be stressed as this is a most important characteristic and was lacking in other efforts at regional cooperation. The ministerial conferences on education, SEATO and the Colombo Plan have been based primarily on support and initiative of states outside Asia. ASEAN reflects high priority local interests stemming from the consideration that the organization is entirely the work of Southeast Asian governments.

³⁴Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 119.

³⁵Adam Malik, "Promise in Indonesia," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 2 (January, 1968), p. 302.

Finally, much of the potential significance of ASEAN derives from Indonesia's participation, which helps remove the stigma of a Western orientation. ASEAN participation represents somewhat of a departure in the nature of Indonesia's foreign policy and opens the possibility for Indonesian collaboration with states that have had successful development experience--Thailand and Malaysia. Within a few months after the Declaration, the five Governments agreed to designate Indonesia as the host of the organization's standing committee.³⁶ Soon after representatives began meeting in Djakarta and in February of 1968, they had identified a series of projects which were to be initiated. For example, efforts will concentrate on food production and supply, in which ASEAN is expected to facilitate data exchanges and loans of specialists.

Further, it will be the function of the organization to pursue combined ASEAN trade missions outside the region and meetings of business organizations to achieve trade liberalization measures.

In addition, exchanges of personnel and data in such fields as transport and telecommunications and publishing. Moreover, a number of steps were taken to exchange defense information and in 1968 some leaders offered suggestions for defense cooperation.³⁷ These steps represent at least a mild change in the Asian political environment which has been and still is torn by severe ethnic differences and narrow nationalistic policies. In many cases, the explanation of the change is the recognition

³⁶ Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 121.

³⁷ "Cooperation in Asia," Washington Post, January 14, 1968, p. 22.

that the task of economic development can be aided by collaboration with neighbors. To date, several noteworthy steps have been taken which illustrate that there is quiet progress. T.T.B. Koh lists several.³⁸ Though no dramatic breakthroughs have been made the Association has identified specific areas of cooperation including (1) food production and supply; (2) communications, air traffic service and meteorology; (3) civil air transportation; and (4) shipping.

Further, a mild breakthrough has been made in the field of tourism. The five governments have agreed to promote VISIT ASEAN YEAR 1971 through joint publicity abroad, in order to attract tourists to the ASEAN region as opposed to individual countries. Under consideration is a proposal for the pooling of passenger rights between the airlines of the member states. Under this scheme, only carriers of ASEAN countries could pick up passengers between points within the region. The ASEAN fund is another example of the countries' intentions to cooperate for mutual benefit. Under this fund, each nation has contributed one million dollars to finance joint projects approved by the ASEAN ministerial meetings.

In recent meetings, the ministers gave approval to more than ninety recommendations concerning regional practices.³⁹ Many of these include agreements between two or three nations. For example, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia have established a buffer stock arrangement in

³⁸T. T. B. Koh, "International Collaboration Concerning Southeast Asia," The Annals, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), p. 21.

³⁹Koh, The Annals, p. 22; Also see: "ASEAN: Inching Forward," Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 71 (April 3, 1971), pp. 15-16.

the tin mining industry and Singapore has formed a joint airline with Malaysia. Singapore has also taken steps to reduce taxes for industrialists forming partnerships, in Indonesia with Indonesian entrepreneurs. Finally, in 1970, though Cambodia is not a member, the Cambodians in 1970 signed an agreement with Singapore to cooperate in the fields of timber and fisheries.

Koh also discusses another aspect of ASEAN which warrants attention. This is the relationship between the organization and the United Nations. At the twenty-fifth session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) held in April, 1969, a proposal was made that ECAFE conduct an economic study of the five ASEAN nations and help identify areas where closer cooperation might be feasible. This link has significance for two reasons. First, it enables ASEAN to receive the benefits of the UN. Second, since ECAFE is somewhat impartial, recommendations made will be given serious consideration by all member nations.

Another effort in the field of regional cooperation which involves the five ASEAN countries is the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Council (SEAMEC) which was formed in 1965 by the five ASEAN countries in addition to Laos and South Vietnam.⁴⁰ To date, SEAMEC has given birth to a Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture, a Regional Center for Tropical Biology, a Regional Center for Tropical Medicine and Public Health, a Regional Center for Education in Science, a Regional English Language Center and a Regional Center for Technology. Thus, success in these endeavors may provide a source of confidence for

⁴⁰Koh, The Annals, p. 22; "ASEAN: Inching Forward," pp. 15-16.

the pursuit of other regional undertakings.

Within the economic sphere, the Southeast Asian nations appear to have taken at least the first few steps toward economic cooperation. If achievements in economic cooperation are reflected in accelerated rates of growth, then it would seem reasonable to expect a continuation of political support for regionalism. Further, improvements in economic conditions should help in reducing the appeals on which insurgents have operated for many decades. Yet, it seems absurd to assume that subversive efforts in the area will quickly subside. Thus, interest in defense cooperation may be forthcoming. As previously mentioned, this aspect of regionalism has been discussed, and though substantial efforts have not been made in this direction, the probability of its emergence seem possible.

Defense Cooperation

Though ASEAN was largely espoused to be organized around the traditional "safe area" of economic cooperation, the desirability of expanding its activities into the military area was openly expressed before the ink was dry on the Declaration.⁴¹ All the nations of the association have indicated an interest in regional defense cooperation and even President Marcos of the Philippines suggested in 1968 that "an interim security arrangement be made within the framework of ASEAN."⁴²

⁴¹Werner Levi, "The Future of Southeast Asia," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 4 (April, 1970), p. 350.

⁴²Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 122.

The five nations are searching for ways to provide for their own security and, while it would be misleading to state that regional defense will become a reality in the near future, it is significant that the countries are thinking in these terms and beginning to overlook the extreme nationalistic tendencies of the past.

The present ASEAN group now represents a sizable portion of the population, land mass, and resources that comprise Southeast Asia. If this group eventually represents an interconnected regional defense system, it could take a major stride toward assuming the burden of its own security. Against the background of China and the forces which give reality to regionalism, it is evident that for a multipolar Asia to evolve there must be a structure in which the United States is not the only counterweight to China. This counterweight may take the form of an ASEAN defense force and, though its development may lag behind economic cooperation, it may be appropriate for several reasons.

Initially, it seems to this writer, that SEATO is an inappropriate model for the future. Essentially, SEATO is a unilateral American guarantee with merely the coloring of or a tinge of multilateralism. In addition, the leaders of Southeast Asia seek to disassociate themselves from a heavy dependence on the United States or any other great power. Finally, with the advent of the Nixon Doctrine, a declining U.S. posture and the stated objective of allowing Asian countries to share more of the burden of defending themselves, SEATO appears inappropriate. Concerning the future of SEATO, Richard M. Nixon has written:

SEATO was useful and appropriate to its time, but it was Western in origin and drew its strength from the United States and Europe. It has weakened to

the point at which it is little more than an institutional embodiment of an American commitment, and a somewhat anachronistic relic of the days when France and Britain were active members. Asia today needs its own security undertakings, reflecting the new realities of Asian independence and Asian needs.⁴³

A second reason why defense cooperation appears appropriate concerns the development patterns of Asian regionalism. Asian leaders of today realize that defense cooperation is an extremely difficult undertaking and that considerable common experience and trust is required before this form of cooperation can be attempted. Thai Minister Khoman has cemented this point when he said: "Joint economic projects will provide the ASEAN nations with something they want to join together to defend."⁴⁴

A final aspect of the appropriateness of defense cooperation concerns the nature of the threats in the area. It seems reasonable to predict that security threats in the area will be primarily concerned with defense against low-level operations or insurgent threats. This should be a task which the countries of ASEAN are capable of combating and defeating. Obviously, the countries of the association cannot meet the full range of defense functions. The ultimate security against, for example, nuclear blackmail or large-scale aggression can only be provided by a great power.

Perhaps, if these countries are expected to shoulder more of the defense burden, they should be assured that the U.S. will maintain the

⁴³Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 1 (October, 1967), p. 115.

⁴⁴Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia, p. 138.

strategic umbrella, at least for the immediate future. Though the ASEAN Declaration stresses the participating nations' stability and security from external powers and further maintains that all foreign bases are temporary, this does not seem to preclude the U.S. from temporarily backstopping the organization. In brief, assuming the future defense needs are primarily for counter-insurgent type operations, then it seems appropriate that capabilities of a joint ASEAN force be used for combating these lower level threats.

In retrospect, there are three reasons why a joint ASEAN counterinsurgency force appears feasible. First, the shortcomings of SEATO for the future. Second, when economic growth develops the countries involved will have an investment worth defending and finally, owing to the likely nature of future threats, nations in the area should be able to combat them. If this cooperation does, in fact, become reality, there are several implications for the United States.

First, concerning the ASEAN member nations, it would appear that this group includes those nations which can reasonably be regarded as having at least some of the characteristics of stability insofar as the region as a whole is concerned. Resultingly, the U.S. would appear to have an interest in insuring the security of the five states. Further, though formal commitments to Thailand and the Philippines may still exist, there is a strongly held belief within the U.S. that commitments in Southeast Asia should not be enlarged. Thus, if there is an increasing interest in regional defense cooperation, then it would appear that the United States can hardly fail to benefit. Third, a policy of continued American disengagement may help to galvanize Asians into accelerating

their plans for self-reliance--much as Britain's announced withdrawal from Malaysia led Malaysia to consider regional defense cooperation.

Last, obviously a policy of disengagement cannot be pursued without restraint. However, if a policy of disengagement is followed, it may lead to a relaxation of China's attitude toward United States "containment." To cite an example, both Thailand and the U.S. will benefit if China finds less reason to believe that the Bangkok government is an American puppet. Yet, only some reduction in Thailand's heavy dependence on the United States is likely to produce such a change in Chinese thinking. An ASEAN defense force might be a major step toward convincing the Thais that it is feasible to reduce dependence on American guarantees and, thus, convince China that Thailand is not a provocative neighbor--possibly reducing the threat from Peking.

From the aforementioned implications, it appears that three primary guidelines emerge for a United States foreign policy toward Southeast Asian nations. First, groupings of certain states represent a development generally favorable to American interests and should probably be encouraged. Second, regional security cooperation should not be seized upon as a justification for premature withdrawals. We must insure that ASEAN and other defense capabilities are not overestimated. Finally, the United States must encourage the interest and cooperation of the one nation of the area that possesses enormous capacity for supporting ASEAN and the nations of Southeast Asia--Japan.

CHAPTER III

JAPAN, SOVIET UNION, AND THE EMERGENCE OF QUADRILATERAL BALANCE

Japan

The role which Japan decides to play in Southeast Asia may be one of the most important factors in the future of the area. In a press conference on April 7, 1954, President Eisenhower stated:

In its economic aspects, loss of Indochina would take away that region that Japan must have as a trading area, or it would force Japan to run toward the communist areas in order to live. The consequences of the loss of Japan to the free world are just incalculable.¹

Carl Oglesby--writing in his essay on Containment and Change--refers to Japan as "an extremely critical element," and he sets forth the following propositions.² First, Japan's economic strength is the crucial element in America's policy of containing China and maintaining peace in Asia. Japan is the bastion. Second, with the exception of Canada, Japan is our leading trading partner and is of major commercial importance. Third, if China and Japan develop economic interdependency, then the brute mathematics of the relationship may doom Japan to juniority--much as Britain would be junior to an economically integrated European continent.

¹William A. Williams, The Shaping of American Diplomacy (Chicago: Rand McNally Company, 1956), p. 1119.

²Carl Oglesby, Containment and Change (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 128.

If Japan has no long-term alternative to massive Chinese trade, she will be left without an alternative to a progressively more pro-Chinese orientation. Last, Japan's only chance for a long-term alternative to the developing market of China lies with the more slowly-developing and less organizable markets of the South Pacific, and Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia's now buried treasures mean that her markets, once developed, will exert a great pull on Japan--the trader--regardless of who develops them. Thus, Oglesby concludes: what Japan and the U.S. face in the Pacific is the formation of a regional economic system which must include Japan, would quite likely be dominated by China, and whose potential and power in the Pacific would be considerable.³

Recently (April, 1971) the Japanese Ambassador to the United States delivered a lecture at the Naval War College and stated:

Two-way trade between Japan and the United States has grown rapidly since the 1950s and is approaching \$10 billion this year. This is the largest volume of overseas trade between any two nations in the world. Only United States-Canadian trade is larger.⁴

In addition, about 30 per cent of Japan's international trade is with the United States, and this fact caused one journalist to remark, "Japan cannot afford an American growth rate as low as 3%."⁵ Outside the United States, the region of greatest importance to the Japanese economy is Southeast Asia which accounted for about 29 per cent of Japan's trade in 1968.⁶

³Oglesby, Containment and Change, p. 129.

⁴Nobuhiko Ushiba, "Japan: Her Role in World Affairs," Naval War College Review, Vol. 23, No. 8 (April, 1971), p. 18.

⁵Max Ways, "Why Japan's Growth is Different," Fortune (November, 1967), p. 246.

⁶James M. Elster, "The United States-Japan Alliance," Naval War College Review, Vol. 22, No. 5 (January, 1970), p. 26.

To maintain this pattern the Japanese have advocated a multi-lateral system of development which stresses accumulation of capital, development of technology and improvement of management ability. Thus, given Japanese dependence on Southeast Asian markets, the significance of the U.S. commitment to Vietnam in 1964 and 1965 was not so much the decision to fight communism but the decision to underwrite the development of the entire region. The U.S. exported nearly \$4-billion to Japan in 1969,⁷ an amount nearly equal to that exported to Britain and France combined.

Presently, the Japanese economy is outstripping almost every other in the world (with the possible exception of the United States). It is growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent, ranks number three in the world in total GNP (Gross National Product) and leading Japanese economists are now considering proposals to double the GNP in the next twenty years.⁸ (In addition, Japan enjoys secure sea lanes owing to the presence of the U.S. Seventh Fleet.) According to former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Edwin O. Reischauer, "Almost half the energy sources on which Japan lives--the oil of the Middle East--passes through the straits of Malacca."⁹ The sea lanes are an extremely vital factor in the security of the island nation. In addition to oil, numerous other materials move in and out of Japan by sea. These include iron ore, cotton, lumber, wool,

⁷Alexis Johnson, "Japan and Future American Relations," The Annals, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), p. 65.

⁸Ushiba, "Japan: Her Role in World Affairs," p. 19.

⁹Edwin O. Reischauer, Beyond Vietnam (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Company, 1968), p. 133.

and foodstuffs.

Finally, in 1970, the Japanese Foreign Office released figures which indicate that the island nation now enjoys a substantially higher per capita income than do the 200 million people of the Soviet Union.¹⁰ This only re-emphasizes the fact that Japan has reached the point where she can now make new and more extensive contributions to stability and progress in Asia. It seems obvious that Japan has, in fact, been given a "free ride" in the Southeast Asian situation. However, with the implementation of the "low posture" policy, she may no longer be able to maintain her lack of military presence.

The Vietnam experience has certainly convinced many Americans that there is something fundamentally wrong with a strategy which requires the United States to assume the military burden while Japan channels its energy into the relatively secure business of developmental assistance and proceeds to trade with all the combatants, simultaneously, in a particular conflict. If the somewhat close alliance between the U.S. and the island nation is to continue, then a much more equitable balance will have to be cemented in the respective roles. This very factor caused former Secretary of Defense MacNamara to remark:

If, for example, other nations really believe, as they say they do, that it is in the common interest to deter the expansion of Red China's economic and political control beyond its national boundaries, then they must take a more active role in guarding the defense perimeter.¹¹

¹⁰

Johnson, "Japan and Future American Relations," p. 65.

¹¹Robert S. MacNamara, The Essence of Security (New York: Harper and Row Company, 1968), p. 156.

There can be little doubt that Japan possesses the capacity for a much enlarged role in Southeast Asia in both the economic and defense spheres. However, it is also apparent that gaining the island nation's economic cooperation will be much easier than obtaining a larger participation in defense and security. Japan, is already substantially involved in Asia and has important interests in the development of Southeast Asia. Foreign Minister Aichi has stated as one of Japan's objectives: "To create a Southeast Asia free from war, we have to join hands with each other for the cause of development and stability. It is in this spirit that Japan will be a partner in joint efforts of the Southeast Asian countries to advance toward a bright future."¹²

This was a call for economic cooperation leading to a peaceful future, and it cannot be overemphasized that Japan has a tremendous economic stake in Southeast Asia. Even in 1967, Japan had 28 per cent of Southeast Asian trade, completely overshadowing Communist China, replacing former European nations, and surpassing the U.S.¹³ Further, Japan is the first or second leading trade partner with every nation in the area with the exception of Cambodia where it is third.¹⁴

More significant is the fact that in recent years, Japan has enlarged its role in regional affairs and has become active in several regional programs. For example, in 1966 they participated in the conference on

¹²James Buck, "Japan's Defense Options," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 10 (October, 1970), p. 896.

¹³Donald C. Hellman, "The Emergence of an East Asian Subsystem," International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 13, No. 4 (December, 1969), p. 429.

¹⁴Ibid.

Asian Agricultural Development, joined in multilateral aid to Indonesia (1967), joined the Asian and Pacific Council in 1966, and pledged \$200 million to the Asian Development Bank while providing that organization's first president. The Asian and Pacific Council was formed at Seoul in June of 1966 with nine members--South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Nationalist China, South Vietnam and Japan.

The initial goal of ASPAC was purely economic cooperation through a regional bank to handle development of rice and an international technician pool.¹⁵ This may have been the price of Japanese participation as the organization has voiced little support for defense undertakings.

It does not seem too unrealistic to assume that Japan will, no doubt, play an increasingly constructive role in Asian economic cooperation. Moreover, Japan seems to look upon her economic power as the primary way she can combat the security threat in Asia. Writing in Naval War College Review, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States wrote in 1971:

The security threat in Asia seems to be not so much a danger of large-scale aggression by one country against another as it is the type of clandestine support that one country might give to a group in a second country for ideological reasons. Such support would be based upon social and political unrest in the second country. The unrest which invites this type of aggression is largely caused by the kind of poverty which now exists throughout much of Asia. And the poverty problem in Asia, home to over one-half of the total world population, is staggering. In this context, Japan's duty is clear. She must use her new economic strength to help bring about the stability and strength in the Far East that is

¹⁵"Japan's Economy Growing," New York Times, June 16, 1966, p. 21.

necessary to the enduring peace of that region.¹⁶

In essence, Japan is already somewhat active in the economic sphere within Southeast Asia. However, the sphere of defense cooperation is quite another matter. At present, the 261,000 man "self-defense" force cannot be legally deployed outside Japan and recent surveys indicate that an overwhelming number of Japanese feel that no military arms should go to Southeast Asia.¹⁷ This survey also caused Mendel to conclude:

The pacifist organization and nuclear allergy of the vast majority of the Japanese public, including the younger generation often assumed to have forgotten the lessons of World War II and the Pacifist Occupation Reforms, is clearly evident in all of the data presented above. No one should fear or expect Japan to assume a military containment role in the 1970's.¹⁸

It is worthy of mention, however, that some new trends in Japanese defense policy have been noted recently. Briefly, Japan will no longer depend completely on the Japanese-United States Security Treaty of 1960 but will assume more of the burden for her own defense. This fits in with the Nixon Doctrine, whereby nations assume prime responsibility for their own defense but obviously this cannot be interpreted to mean that they will play a greater role in the defense of other Asian nations. The new program will primarily strengthen the naval defense force and seems to reflect an increasing consciousness of Japan's dependence on the sea lanes.¹⁹ In addition, the promised return of Okinawa in 1972 is reflected

¹⁶Ushiba, "Japan: Her Role in World Affairs," p. 17.

¹⁷Douglas H. Mendel, "Japanese Defense in the 1970's: The Public View," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 12 (December, 1970), p. 1056.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 1068.

¹⁹Kobun Ito, "Japan's Security in the 1970's," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 12 (December, 1970), p. 1033.

in the new policy of added self-reliance. These facts have caused some "Japan watchers" to argue that the dominant thrust of Japanese policy today is not toward the sharing of containment burdens in Southeast Asia but rather toward a military disengagement from the United States.²⁰

In addition to the naval building program, The Economist of October 28, 1967 (pp. 434-36) indicates that during 1968 and 1969 Japan was scheduled to produce 60 fighter aircraft, 45 reconnaissance types, 45 large helicopters and 55 small copters. Further, literally thousands of trucks and small arms were scheduled for production. Moreover, by 1972, Japan will possess three battalions each of Hawk and Hercules missiles and plans were being made for the production of the U.S.-designed F-4 Phantom fighters. Last, with China producing nuclear weapons, this possibility is no longer anathema as it was during the 1950's. Japan is rapidly developing nuclear power for peaceful purposes and according to one evaluation is now producing enough plutonium to produce "one atom bomb a month."²¹

When queried about acquisition and production of nuclear weapons, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States has given a flat "No" answer and cited several reasons, including, the overwhelming negative feeling of the Japanese people, the prohibition by the Constitution, fear of neighboring countries and numerous others.²² Though some new trends

²⁰Elster, "The United States-Japan Alliance," p. 35.

²¹Charlotte Saikowski, "Japan Torn by Nuclear Dilemma," Christian Science Monitor, April 27, 1968, p. 13.

²²Ushiba, "Japan: Her Role in World Affairs," p. 1034.

are surfacing in the Japanese defense posture, they are not of the magnitude to be referred to as a significant change. As Ito has remarked, "It is wiser for Japan to promote good will through cultural and economic cooperation with countries along Japan's sea routes and to meet security requirements by political rather than military measures."²³

The Japanese Foreign Minister commenting on a simple transfer of Southeast Asian peace-keeping responsibilities from the U.S. to Japan has further stated: "Japanese public opinion is simply not prepared for such an undertaking; nor I believe, would the other free nations welcome it. For some time to come there will be no substitute for the continuing presence of American deterrent power."²⁴

It seems apparent that it is highly unlikely that Japan would ever rise up completely from her low-military posture and undertake a large program of rearmament with nuclear weapons and missile capability. However, the enormous increases in Japanese economic power and Japan's increasing involvement in the economies of Southeast Asia would seem to indicate a growing concern and interest for the stability and security of that region.

Thus, Japan shares the interest of seeing Southeast Asia remain stable and at the same time is not willing to play any facsimile of an activist role in the defense of this interest. There is a certain ambivalence and this may be the attraction that the concept of a joint ASEAN-type

²³Ito, "Japan's Security in the 1970's," p. 1034.

²⁴Kiichi Aichi, "Japan's Legacy and Destiny of Change," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 48, No. 2 (October, 1969), p. 31.

security force may present to Japanese leaders. The reasons for this lie in the fact that Japan could make an important contribution to the security of Asia, the counterbalance of China, and the defeat of insurgencies without becoming directly and unilaterally involved. If aid were channeled through the United Nations, it would also be within the scope of the Japanese Constitution.

Support for a regional counterinsurgency force, such as might evolve from organization similar to ASEAN, could eventually represent an acceptable mid-range step for Japan. Obviously, technical training assistance and small arms supply to a force of this type would appear to be much less provocative to China than a Japanese decision to unilaterally rearm. In addition, it would provide a convenient rationale for Japan to maintain her arms industry and with U.S. sanction may be more palatable than unilateral efforts. Japan could contribute small arms, economic assistance, and perhaps, technical advisors rather than making massive troop commitments.

Lucian Pye has remarked, "Even limited cooperation among a few of the Southeast Asian states can provide the necessary formula for bringing Japan effectively into the process of supporting the Asian balance of power."²⁵ However, one is forced to conclude that major Japanese defense participation in Southeast Asia is unlikely during the next decade. Support of an ASEAN-type counterinsurgency force is within the realm of possibility, but Japan looks upon her role as primarily

²⁵Lucian W. Pye, "China in Context," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 45, No. 2 (January, 1967), p. 235.

economic. The words of a former U.S. Ambassador to Japan and one of the leading scholars on the island nation seem to have merit: "do not expect Japan to play more than an economic role in Asia during the next decade."²⁶

The emergence of Japan accounts for the third of the four great power nations that are presently becoming active in Southeast Asia. The fourth nation is the Soviet Union.

Soviet Union

The Soviet Union has become considerably more active in Southeast Asia since the American military disengagement has begun. At an international meeting in Moscow on June 5, 1969, Leonid Brezhev first spoke of "collective security for Southeast Asia."²⁷ This was generally interpreted to mean economic security and according to Gurtov was simply a signal to the nation of the area that the Soviets maintained an interest. Most important, however, the move was designed to undermine the influence of mainland China.

In brief, the Soviet Union has been attempting to prevent the area from becoming a Chinese sphere of influence, and Gurtov and others are of the opinion that statements of Soviet leaders are evidence of this.²⁸ China has been considerably irked by Soviet contracts with Taiwan and contacts with Japan concerning timber harvests in Siberia, docking

²⁶Edwin O. Reischauer, "The Future of Japan," Asian Survey, Vol. 9, No. 8 (August, 1969), p. 639.

²⁷Melvin Gurtov, "Sino-Soviet Relations and Southeast Asia," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Winter, 1971), p. 500.

²⁸"The Soviet Union in Asia," Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 71 (March 20, 1971), p. 20.

rights and access to sea lanes. Further, negotiations have begun between the Soviets and Thailand concerning commercial aviation and trade agreements. Finally, the Soviets have approached India concerning basing privileges and have executed an agreement with Singapore concerning expanded port facilities for Soviet ships.

These facts have served to enhance the Chinese-Soviet split and have caused stiffer competition between them. Regarding these facts, John Badgley remarks, "Sino-Soviet relations are deeply disturbed and will not be resolved, both because of the territorial and prestige factors and because of the competition for world leadership."²⁹ Toward the end of the 1960's, China had acquired an independent nuclear capacity of a sort and was pursuing her self-reliant policies; border clashes even posed the danger of war between the two major communist powers. Further, China underwent a traumatic internal upheaval in 1965-1966--The Cultural Revolution.

To some degree, the "Cultural Revolution" reoriented China's outlook inward resulting in diplomatic isolation. Perhaps, the Chinese are preoccupied with the dual problem of rebuilding China's political system at home as well as by the threat of conflict with the Soviets. During 1969, the Soviet-Chinese conflict reached its maximum danger point.³⁰ For several years, China had resorted to demonstration on the Chinese-

²⁹John H. Badgley, "The American Presence in Asia," The Annals, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), p. 41.

³⁰Harold C. Hinton, "Conflict on the Ussuri," Problems of Communism, Vol. 20 (April, 1971), p. 66.

Soviet border and had expressed defiance of "Soviet Revisionism."³¹

As the locus of the 1969 demonstration, the Chinese chose the disputed island of Chenpao, in the Ussuri River, which had been the scene of similar demonstrations in the past.

Subsequently, according to the Soviet version of the incident (which has gained acceptance, according to Hinton), Chinese troops set an ambush for an outnumbered Soviet patrol in the early hours of March 2. In the ensuing firefight, the Soviets incurred heavy casualties. Subsequently, on March 15, the Soviets ambushed a Chinese patrol and in a larger battle obtained a clearcut victory. These clashes caused Senator Edward Kennedy to remark:

The deterioration of Soviet-Chinese relations in the wake of the recent border clashes may be stimulating at least some of the leaders in Peking to re-evaluate their posture toward the U.S. and provide us with an extraordinary opportunity to break the bonds of distrust.³²

Minor clashes have continued to occur at scattered frontier points and China has become increasingly concerned with security of nuclear weapons installations in Sinkiang province. However, since the major incidents of 1969, both have attempted to avoid major frontier incidents. The Chinese continue to display uncompromising political and ideological hostility toward Moscow and the increased relations between the Soviets and U.S. probably have Peking worried. The Salt Talks, Soviet Treaty with

³¹Ibid., p. 47.

³²A. Doak Barnett, The U.S. and China: The Next Decade (New York: Praeger Company, 1970), p. 155.

West Germany, the absence of an American-Soviet confrontation over Cambodia are all sources of concern to Peking.

At present, the split is much less volatile than in 1969. A navigation agreement has been reached, a new Chinese Ambassador has been sent to Moscow and various negotiations are continuing. Further, name calling has declined, and according to Hinton, "The cult of Mao has clearly declined."³³ In any event, there seems little doubt that the Soviet presence in Southeast Asia is looked upon as a threat to Peking and to some degree may account for the initiation of overtures toward the U.S. in 1971--the advent of "ping-pong diplomacy."

A veteran Asian expert, Sydney Liu, has remarked, "despite the olive branch that Leonid Brezhnev extended to Peking at the Soviet Party Congress in April, 1971, Moscow and Peking remain bitter foes and both have continued to reinforce their garrisons along the 4,000 mile border between them."³⁴ Recently, the Soviets have begun to expand diplomatic, economic, and military influence in the area that China has traditionally considered to be its own backyard. One Western diplomat remarked: "The Russians aren't coming to Southeast Asia, they have already arrived."³⁵

Today, it is common to see Soviet seamen, diplomats, officials, and airline crews in many of the countries of Southeast Asia. Singapore and Malaysia have already established full diplomatic relations with

³³Hinton, "Conflict on the Ussuri," p. 66.

³⁴Sydney Liu, "Russia in Southeast Asia," Newsweek, Vol. 77, No. 15 (April 12, 1971), p. 49.

³⁵Ibid.

Moscow, and the Philippines is expected to do so in the near future. The reason for the acceptance of the Soviet presence seems to be the fundamental change in attitudes of the leaders of the countries of the area. Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew declared: "The Soviet Naval capacity in the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea can be a counterpoise to China's weight . . . on the littoral countries of Asia and Southeast Asia."³⁶ Another diplomat from Singapore remarked, "Frankly, the only way for us and most of the other nations in Southeast Asia to preserve our independence is to have a balance of the big powers in the area."³⁷

Individual countries tend to view the Soviet presence from different perspectives. For example, Laos and Cambodia can point to their Russian embassies as proof of their neutrality in international affairs while the Thais see the Soviet presence as an alternative to Japan's hold on Thai economy and have signed a trade agreement with Moscow. In Malaysia, the Soviet Embassy staff has grown considerably since relations began in 1968. The two countries are now conducting negotiations concerning aid for reorganization of the Malaysian Navy.

Further, the Soviets have been very careful and cautious in order to avoid their old revolutionary image. They try hard to show that they are unlike the savage, unreasonable Chinese Maoists and are instead, "good Communists." In addition, they have not hesitated to criticize insurgent groups that have a Peking orientation. For example,

³⁶Liu, "Russia in Southeast Asia," p. 49.

³⁷Ibid.

in Cambodia, a Soviet diplomat referred to an insurgent group as, "a few hungry peasants"; and in Thailand, a Soviet official commented, "the Guerrillas are merely a bunch of jungle bandits."³⁸ Last, in Ceylon, it was reported on April 22, 1971, that Russian advisors and equipment were being given to the Ceylon government to combat an insurgency initiated by the so-called, "Che Guevarists."³⁹

In brief, there is now a fourth major power operating in Southeast Asia and attempting to fill any vacuum remaining from the declining American presence. It might be argued that the Soviets will never have the strength to match the U.S. economic and military presence. However, the Soviets seem to be making a move in this direction, and it seems reasonable to assume that their presence will be increased during the 1970s. The opinion that the U.S. must fight to keep the Soviets out of Southeast Asia at all costs has been expounded by some American diplomats in the area,⁴⁰ and seems to be testimony to the fact that McCarthyism is alive and well and living in American diplomatic circles of Southeast Asia. However, one American diplomat had a much more enlightened opinion concerning the Soviet presence. He stated: "I think the time has come when we are going to have to live with the Soviets in all areas of the world, including this one."⁴¹

³⁸Liu, "Russia in Southeast Asia," p. 50.

³⁹"Ceylon, All the Way with Che?" Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol. 71 (April 3, 1971), p. 8.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

Thus, now emerging simultaneously with regionalism is a quadrilateral relationship between the United States, China, Japan and the Soviet Union. This new relationship in the area among the great powers is the result of three basic factors. The split between the Soviet Union and the Communist Chinese. The re-emergence of Japan as the number three economic power in the world, and finally, the movement of the U.S. toward a decreasing military involvement and a "low posture" in the future.

Emergence of Quadrilateral Balance

In a sense, therefore, the pattern of great power relations in Southeast Asia in the 1970s will likely be a quadrilateral one, and appears that it will be fundamentally different from the pattern existing in the recent past. There are several reasons for this.

First, each of the four powers can be expected to pursue its interests with independence. Virtually everything each power does will have important implications and repercussions for the other three. For example, the Soviets may try to expand relations with Japan and other nations, thus competing against both the Chinese and American influence.

At times, however, some Soviet policies may parallel those of the United States and, thus, China may fear Soviet-American collusion. Peking, in order to strengthen its position against Moscow, may well decide to initiate more flexible policies toward the U.S. or even Japan; subsequently, Moscow may be apprehensive about Chinese-American cooperation that could become anti-Soviet. Japan provides another example. While pursuing more independent policies she will have an interest in improved relations with both Peking and Moscow but may find that improved

relations with one can have an adverse effect on relations with the other. Further, if Tokyo goes too far in expanding relations with either, it may cause considerable uneasiness in Washington. Finally, the United States will probably want to preserve its alliance with Japan and maintain a balance in U.S.-Soviet relations but will likely continue to push--to Moscow's chagrin--for a lessening of tension with Peking.

Though these factors may appear to be destabilizing elements, there will very likely be limits on the extent to which any of the four powers will be able to manipulate the balance to its advantage. There are two reasons why the situation may be stabilizing rather than destabilizing. First, it does not seem likely that there will be major realignments among any of the four powers that could upset the balance. If, for example, Chinese-Soviet relations improve, it seems unlikely that the alliance could be restored to the status of the early 1950s. If Chinese-American relations improve, significant barriers still exist to deter close relations--the Taiwan question, ideological differences, and so forth.

If Japan expands its relations with one of the Communist powers, a break with the United States would be improbable as Japan's economic interests are closely linked with ours. If the Soviets and Americans sometimes adopt parallel positions against the Chinese, the basic divergencies of interest would likely prevent complete collaboration. From the United States standpoint, the possibility of lessening tensions with China will likely have appeal, both to provide a counterweight to the Soviets and to alleviate the confrontation with China.

Second, the balance may help to reduce the likelihood of large-

power military conflicts for several reasons. None of the four powers, in considering military involvements, will be able to ignore the possible reactions of all the other powers. For example, Peking's apprehension about a hostile Soviet Union at its back will impose new limits on its policies elsewhere, and Moscow's uncertainty about American and Japanese (as well as Chinese) reactions to action it might take should operate to reinforce other constraints against such action.

Further, all four of the major powers, each with its own interests and views, will be involved in situations throughout the region; and instead of bipolar confrontations, more and more situations will involve complicated patterns of competition, cooperation, and parallel actions.

It seems likely that as a result of these factors the quadrilateral balance may create a complex pattern of mutual constraints that could operate to inhibit and limit large-power intervention in local military conflicts and may encourage the pursuit of goals through diplomatic and economic maneuvering and competition.

Hopefully, the complexities created by this balance may reduce the dangers of local conflicts which could invite big-power intervention in some of the sensitive areas of tension. Taiwan is a good example. Peking has not been reckless in its approach to Taiwan recently. However, in the 1950s when it felt it was backed by the alliance with the Soviets, the Chinese were quite willing to initiate military probes to see if the U.S. could be dislodged. The inhibitions to these probes will not support Peking in any action against Taiwan.

Actually, Moscow has mildly hinted that it would like to develop

unofficial contacts with the Nationalist Chinese.⁴² In addition, Japan has frequently stated that, "The maintenance of peace and security in the Taiwan area is a most important factor for the security of Japan."⁴³ In essence, the four-power balance has created new constraints which enlarge the risks and costs that might be involved for Peking if it were to consider military action against Taiwan. Admittedly, there are several factors which could upset the emerging balance in Southeast Asia. In brief, a quadrilateral relationship among the great powers is emerging in Southeast Asia somewhat simultaneously with Asian regionalism.

⁴²A. Doak Barnett, "The New Multipolar Balance in East Asia," The Annals, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), p. 78.

⁴³Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Toward Non-alignment

The era of direct American presence and assistance in Southeast Asia seems to be ending. In countries such as Thailand and South Vietnam (which have depended on the U.S. for many decades) it is apparent that the U.S. is now looking to Asian leaders to seize the initiative and establish the economic and defense goals for their respective countries. To some extent progress is being made through regional economic and defense cooperation. However, regionalism is still in an infantile state and requires proper support of larger nations. Simultaneously emerging in the area is the quadrilateral balance comprised of the four great powers. If a stable and productive Southeast Asia is to evolve in the future then it would appear that these two forces must be compatible and not mutually exclusive.

The emergence of a quadrilateral balance in Southeast Asia may provide a background from which regionalism can make greater progress and achieve self-sufficiency if the great powers participate in a manner which does not rob the arrangement of its Southeast Asian character. Essentially, the main participants in the regional organizations must be the states of the region and the institutions created must be their own. There are several reasons for this. First, the anxieties of the new states concerning foreign intervention would be tempered and their

self-respect strengthened. Further, a purely Asian arrangement would be more responsive to nationalist demands for independence, equality, and status.

Second, this arrangement would hamper the widespread practice in Asia of requesting outside intervention in support of factions or states engaged in internal or international conflicts. Without immediate outside support, the governments of Southeast Asia may be induced to rely increasingly upon themselves. They may, resultingly, devote their energies to internal development and subsequently, decrease "power vacuums." This safeguarding of orderly conditions in a region by the local states themselves will lessen the inducement or need for larger outside nations to become involved and the absence of outside influence may discourage intra-regional strife.

Obviously, a purely Asian arrangement will not be welcome to certain governments as their internal political security may be weakened without external support and the inability to play one outside nation against another may cause a decrease in the power of a certain state. Yet, it would appear that these very roles are a major contributing factor to political unrest in Southeast Asia. Ending them is paramount for a more secure foundation for the region's future. The existence of a government by the tie of complete military and economic support from an outside power is simply incompatible with nationalist sentiments that Asian leaders instill in their people. The major powers do not cherish this situation either and the U.S., China, and the Soviet Union have all urged new states to insure their viability by means of their

own efforts.¹

The whole purpose of a future arrangement for Southeast Asia must be to enhance the viability of the states of the region--thus, the determination of the meaning of viability cannot be left to the determination of a certain government at a certain moment. Controversy and opposition will be barriers on the path to a future Southeast Asian arrangement. Inevitably, innovations will hurt some and benefit others. Nevertheless, an Asian arrangement appears objectively as the most desirable solution of the region's political problems from the standpoint of the Southeast Asian states, as such, and not any particular group within them. The obvious prerequisite of success is that the arrangement be sufficiently attractive to enough leaders to serve the interests of the regional states--mainly, independent survival in a peaceful atmosphere.

The key element in the implementation of any arrangement is an organization of Southeast Asian states for close, often collective, cooperation in all field including military. The organization's political orientation must be toward non-alignment; it must not become part of any other regional organization or alliance system. Several organizations have been created since the end of World War II, though few included military matters, and none passed the embryonic stage. The translation of good intentions into working systems has been prevented by emotional hostilities, nationalism and so forth. Regardless, these schemes were

¹Werner Levi, "The Future of Southeast Asia," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 4 (April, 1970), p. 352.

indicative of a perceived need. ASEAN is the latest manifestation of this need but in contrast to other plans the talk surrounding ASEAN has included military matters.

Regionalism Needs Impetus

Though this association has made strides in many areas, it has not as yet undertaken any military arrangements other than conferences. It appears that regional cooperation needs added impetus in most areas and that several advantages need to be stressed to the leaders of the nations of the area. One general advantage from a regional organization would be the breaking of a vicious circle that has throttled the states of the region since independence. There has been an acute lack of machinery available to settle peacefully the many conflicts disturbing regional relations; yet no machinery has been created because of these many conflicts. The only systems for conflict resolution at the states' disposal is either global organizations or organizations with an Asian focus in which non-Asian nations participate.

Suspicion and distrust many times prevents the regional states from seriously considering the use of these organizations for conflict resolution. Certain states argue that non-Asians cannot understand the culture-bound character of their conflicts and thus, cannot contribute to their resolve. For example, it is difficult to settle major territorial claims, which originated in defunct pre-colonial institutions, with the rules of a twentieth century legal system. It is even more frustrating to attempt to resolve political tensions based on Confucian or other Asian concepts (such as tribute paying) with the help of a

modern international system within which much concepts are archaic or unknown. Thus, an Asian regional organization could supplement global institutions, and at the same time satisfy Asian demands by suggesting solutions of conflicts and, further, by suggesting solutions of problems before they become conflicts. This would be done by methods adjusted to the needs of Asians and acceptable to them.

A second advantage of regional organizations which should be stressed is the opportunity afforded representatives of regional states to join in frequent and informed meetings. In this situation, they would not feel the need to individually maintain a status of equality and prestige with the more powerful nations and would not have to fear "neo-colonial" schemes or other conspiracies behind proposals of an economic or political nature. Further, they would not have to attempt to outdo each other in either wooing or condemning outsiders. Rather, they could devote themselves to constructive discussions of common problems and ways of solving them. Last, they could overcome mutual ignorance which has previously contributed to the perpetuation of age-old animosities and a complete absence of common effort. Subsequently, political tension could be reduced and political cooperation improved.

Another advantage would be the increase in political influence for each state through common action. Economic development could be furthered through coordinated planning and joint execution of common programs. When economic aid is given and received for truly economic purposes, its value could be enhanced by channeling it through the organization; where it is intended for political purposes the organization could make it less risky. Many of these points have been clearly

recognized by many regional states. However, plans for economic cooperation are less likely to occur under adverse political circumstances. The reverse may be true as well. A regional organization must deal with all areas of international relations. Only a comprehensive organization can, in the long run, ameliorate the disturbing influence of one area upon another. Only in a comprehensive organization can the full advantage of success in one area be made to benefit all the other areas.

There is no assumption here that creation of an all-encompassing regional organization is an easy matter. There are numerous obstacles to overcome. Nationalist feelings still run high in many countries, and the people have yet to develop a group identity as Southeast Asians. The personal ambitions of certain leaders and inexperience in regional intercourse are additional limitations and there are others that could be mentioned. However, the importance of emotionally conditioned interests may fade in the wake of immediate and vital problems that are constantly demanding solutions. The attraction of a regional organization is that it can satisfy some of the emotional needs as well as the physical needs.

Support of Great Powers Needed

Many of the governments in Southeast Asia are aware of this potential but are hesitant because of uncertainty concerning the positions of major powers. In brief, the great powers, especially the United States and Soviet Union could hasten the process of regionalism. The self-denial that would be demanded of these powers could be expected only if they considered an independent, comprehensive organization ad-

vantageous to themselves. There is some evidence to indicate that they do consider such an organization advantageous. Both are attempting to prevent one nation from dominating the area and have primarily directed their efforts toward China. In Southeast Asia, as in other parts of the world, non-aligned states can act as buffers between these two major powers as well as between either of them and China.

As previously mentioned, the United States has consistently supported moves for regional organizations and welcomed the creation of ASEAN. Limiting China's power through a regional organization would cater to the basic U.S. policy of preventing one nation from dominating the area. The Soviet Union, by developing closer relations with many of the states of the area, already has made her interest known. From the strictly American viewpoint, the filling of any vacuum by a regional organization rather than Soviets may be preferable but it may not be unrealistic to assume that they may be preferable to the Soviets as well.

The Soviets, like the United States, are primarily concerned with preventing China from filling any position the American and British withdrawals from the area might leave open. Presumably, the Soviets most likely would not cherish (any more than the U.S.) the idea of being the "Marshall Dillon" of Southeast Asia but are actively engaged in the political isolation and even the military encirclement of China. Brezhnev's suggestion for a collective security system for Southeast Asia indicates that the creation of a regional organization is at least a possibility for Soviet policy.

Peking's attitude toward any regional organization is much more difficult to project. If Peking were faced with having to accept the

best possible rather than an ideal arrangement it might be reconciled to the existence of a regional organization. There seems little doubt that China would interpret such an organization, as directed specifically against her and would be partially correct. Most likely Peking would prefer hegemony over at least parts of Southeast Asia and likely will, in the long run, aim at it. In the meantime, China has made no open moves to expand beyond small border areas. She has made it clear that North Korea and North Vietnam are considered vital for security, and she would not tolerate the physical presence of an outside power.

These border areas are undoubtedly considered to constitute China's sphere of influence, and it is likely that the closer the spheres of other nations are located to those of China, the tighter control that Peking would want over its sphere. The existence of a wide non-aligned grouping in Southeast Asia could actually alleviate Chinese fears by broadening her security belt. The bargain for China would be to trade a relatively firm control over immediate border areas for a lesser influence in a much wider buffer zone. Peking would also have to be made aware that the organization could hardly be a threat to her security. At best, it would be a defense system in relation to China, and even its deterrent effect might be inadequate without the assistance of outsiders.

In any event, the American disengagement is unlikely to open new possibilities for Chinese expansion since the Soviets are already foreclosing on them with a small but active presence. The Chinese may dislike a Soviet penetration even more than an American one. The prospect of the U.S. and the Soviets implementing their policies in a manner to thwart Peking's influence must be a nightmare to the Chinese. For

these reasons, Peking may be much less reluctant to accept a regional organization that would temper the American, Soviet and Japanese as well as a Chinese penetration of Southeast Asia. These are mere optimistic speculations, concerning great power policies that may ensue.

However, it seems clear that an effective regional organization requires the tolerance of the great powers and preferably their cooperation. This is not only true in the sense that major powers must refrain from destroying the organization but also in the sense that their positive support may well be indispensable during an organization's birth as well as to its ultimate survival. Indeed, it seems apparent that the prospect of outside help for Southeast Asian enterprises, especially economic, has been one of the incentives to regional cooperation. In view of the enormous needs of the region for future development, this fact is likely to remain for several decades. This may be one of the effective tools available to outsiders to encourage and reinforce the trend toward regional cooperation.

Obviously, none of the major powers would tolerate the organization if it was considered to be the product of one of them. Thus, all outside support must be so organized that neither the non-aligned nor the Asian character of the organization is endangered. This condition could be best fulfilled if the support is channeled through an international agency rather than through any one member directly. Agreement among outsiders on this is paramount as the temptation of regional states will be great to circumvent it. Many of the states in the area have already been reported as welcoming an intensification of the power struggle in the area on the ground that this enlarges their leeway for political

maneuvering. With the entry of the Soviets, new opportunities of this type develop.

If a regional organization exploits the presence of a great power, no great harm appears manifest. In contrast, if individual states attempt to do so, the organization may be destined for an early demise as the situation that initially made the organization necessary would have been recreated. A further improvement in the organization's results might be achieved if the needed outside support would come from an Asian or smaller Western nation. As previously mentioned, Japan is actively engaged in furthering the regional cooperation trend in Asia and during the past few years has stimulated regional arrangements. A comprehensive regional organization would seem to be in accord with Tokyo's policies and under proper circumstances, Japan might play an instrumental role.

William P. Bundy has set forth five "conditions for lasting peace"² in Southeast Asia, and they seem to culminate with the conclusion of a non-aligned regional organization for the area. These conditions respond to the desires of Southeast Asians, while at the same time being compatible with the interests and interactions of the great powers. First, and foremost, the preservation of the independence of the individual nations is paramount. Second, a continued and improved rate of economic progress. Third, the fullest possible cooperation among the Southeast

²William P. Bundy, "New Tides in Southeast Asia," Foreign Affairs, (January, 1971), p. 192.

Asian nations. Fourth, which Bundy refers to as a "common law of change"³ simply means that the nations of an area are the initial judges of whether change and the use of violence or force of any kind are or are not fair and tolerable--and, thus, are or are not to be opposed or supported by outside nations.

The fifth condition is the correct behavior of the great powers. Optimistically, this should consist of a guarantee among interested outside powers that they will not interfere by military or subversive means in the area, and acting on the finding of the local jury, will join together against an outside power or local nation that does. This is easier to say than do. If a great-power make? Bundy feels a "self-imposed law of behavior"⁴ and maintaining equilibrium. The former is simply a code of conduct which bars great-power pressure and aggression and subversion. The latter is that no power should threaten to dominate. The first three conditions appear to be at least in the developmental stages but the last two are dependent on the actions of the great powers.

Thus, in broad outline, are the desirable directions for the future development of international politics in Southeast Asia. A regional organization is far from an ideal solution but may have promise for a durable peace, and further, it lies within the framework of past and present policies conducted by the regional states as well as several major powers. Many of the states of the area are committed to such an

³Bundy, "New Tides in Southeast Asia," p. 193.

⁴Ibid., p. 194.

organization and their inability to transform intentions into reality may be overcome gradually by the pressures produced from the power struggles of the great powers. Non-cooperation was a luxury that Southeast Asian nations could afford as long as Asia was a non-man's land for the external world.

However, the risks for each state of non-cooperation are rapidly increasing. Many of the leaders do not enjoy being a battle ground of the major powers and a conviction is gaining among them that a position outside the sphere of influence of any one of the major powers is a desirable goal for them all--and this includes North Vietnam, South Vietnam or even a United Vietnam. Similarly, the Soviet Union, United States, and Japan would seem to share this position and it is conceivable that China may be persuaded to accept it as well. The most promising way to reach this goal appears to be through the creation of a non-aligned comprehensive organization in Southeast Asia.

Whether or not a regional organization can develop fully in Southeast Asia depends to a great extent on the actions of the nations that are a part of the new quadrilateral balance emerging in the area. The chances of achieving regional cooperation are real, and the strides already taken are significant, but the great powers must allow Southeast Asian hands to shape the Southeast Asian future. The great-power role must be one of a secondary nature in comparison to the nations of the area.

Today in Southeast Asia, there appears to be a convergence of factors that appear to be highly favorable to the United States. Precisely at a time when Americans are most anxious to reduce their some-

what unilateral role in Asian affairs, nations like Japan have begun to achieve major economic output and nations like Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore have at least begun to espouse a political outlook that makes the concept of burden-sharing applicable. If Southeast Asians can be encouraged and helped to assume more of the burdens for their development and security, it is not unlikely that at least a partial buffer will have been created between the United States and China.

Circumstances are now appropriate for Southeast Asian peoples to be encouraged to rely less upon American guarantees and more upon themselves. Also from the U.S. standpoint, it must be faced that the power to effect basic change in the area is limited. In the words of David Mozingo, "The power fundamentally to change the basic indigenous forces shaping the development and character of nationalism in Southeast Asian countries lies neither in Peking nor Washington."⁵ Mozingo also states:

The fear, expressed in the argument that neutralism or nonalignment is simply a temporary way station on the road to communism, that Peking and other communists can push over popular nationalist regimes like dominoes once a Communist revolution succeeds somewhere else, is overwhelmingly contradicted by the proven vitality of Asian nationalism in the last twenty years."⁶

If the major powers are truly limited by nationalism then this is simply

⁵David Mozingo, "Containment in Asia Reconsidered," World Politics, Vol. 19, No. 3 (April, 1967), p. 377.

⁶Ibid., p. 373.

an additional incentive, one for the shaping of the Asian future by Asian hands.

Though this study has presented some quite optimistic speculations concerning the actions of the great powers in the future structure of Southeast Asia, these were mere "food for thought." For, in reality, it seems clear that the future will rest on the two pillars: the collective interests of the Southeast Asian nations acting in regional groupings, and the policies of the four powers who comprise the quadrilateral balance. The major elements of this structure seem clear. However, the relationship of them to each other is far from clear and will depend largely upon decisions which are still to be made.

If the great powers utilize a less direct and more restrained approach to the area so as to encourage and sustain regionalism, self-reliance and Asian initiatives, then the construction of a stable international order in the area may be forthcoming. If the opposite conditions ensue whereby great powers continue to play a direct meddling role, then the most gross type of instability and lack of unity in the area will likely prevail in conjunction with the veils of colonialism. Active regionalism is one of the new realities of Southeast Asia and one of the more promising vehicles for the nations of the area to maintain their independence, unity, economic growth and self-respect in the midst of great power presence. Obviously, whether or not this avenue is allowed to flourish will be dependent to a degree on the great powers; they must allow Asian hands to play the primary role in the shaping of the Asian future. The great powers can play an important secondary role, but it must remain secondary and supporting.

It would seem that the major powers should all share several basic interests in the area. First, today because of the dangerous imbalance between population and wealth, and because of the pressures to achieve equality with the Northern nations, Southeast Asia is a somewhat explosively unstable part of the world. Though far away from the United States, fires in Southeast Asia could lead to greater conflagrations. Therefore, the great powers must attempt to bring the area closer to prosperity, peace, and stability.

Second, the great powers appear to share in the future of the area. One day the nations of the area will be much more powerful than they are today. If this power is directed toward non-cooperative aggressive behavior, then it could threaten world peace. If it is oriented toward cooperation and more peaceful undertakings, then it will be much less of a threat. The great powers have an important stake in the future of the area--twenty or even fifty years from now.

Last, though it might sound somewhat unscholarly, it would seem that there is a moral imperative to help those in need. In a broader context, it seems that it will be more and more difficult for the world to continue half poor and half rich, half in turmoil and half at peace. These nations which remain poor and impoverished will be a continuing drain on the rest of the world. An unhappy, turbulent and war-torn area will be a threat to all. The great powers should share the interest of helping deprived areas become healthy parts of the world in which we live.

Thus, the great powers have important interests in the future of the structure which is now emerging in Southeast Asia. How they adjust

to that structure may determine the stability or instability of the area for many decades. The time has arrived when we must now turn our thoughts beyond the Vietnam quagmire and begin thinking more of the future of the entire Southeast Asia area and to the two-pillared structure which is emerging.

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